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DEVELOPMENT
OF
INDU POLITY AND POLITICAL THEORIES *Part 1*

BY
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Author of the English Translation of Cānakya Sūtras, the Kātyāyana-matā-saṅgraha,
Economic Life and Progress in Ancient India, and Kautilya—His
Social Ideal and Political Theory.*



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PART I

From the earliest times to the growth of the Imperialistic Movement.

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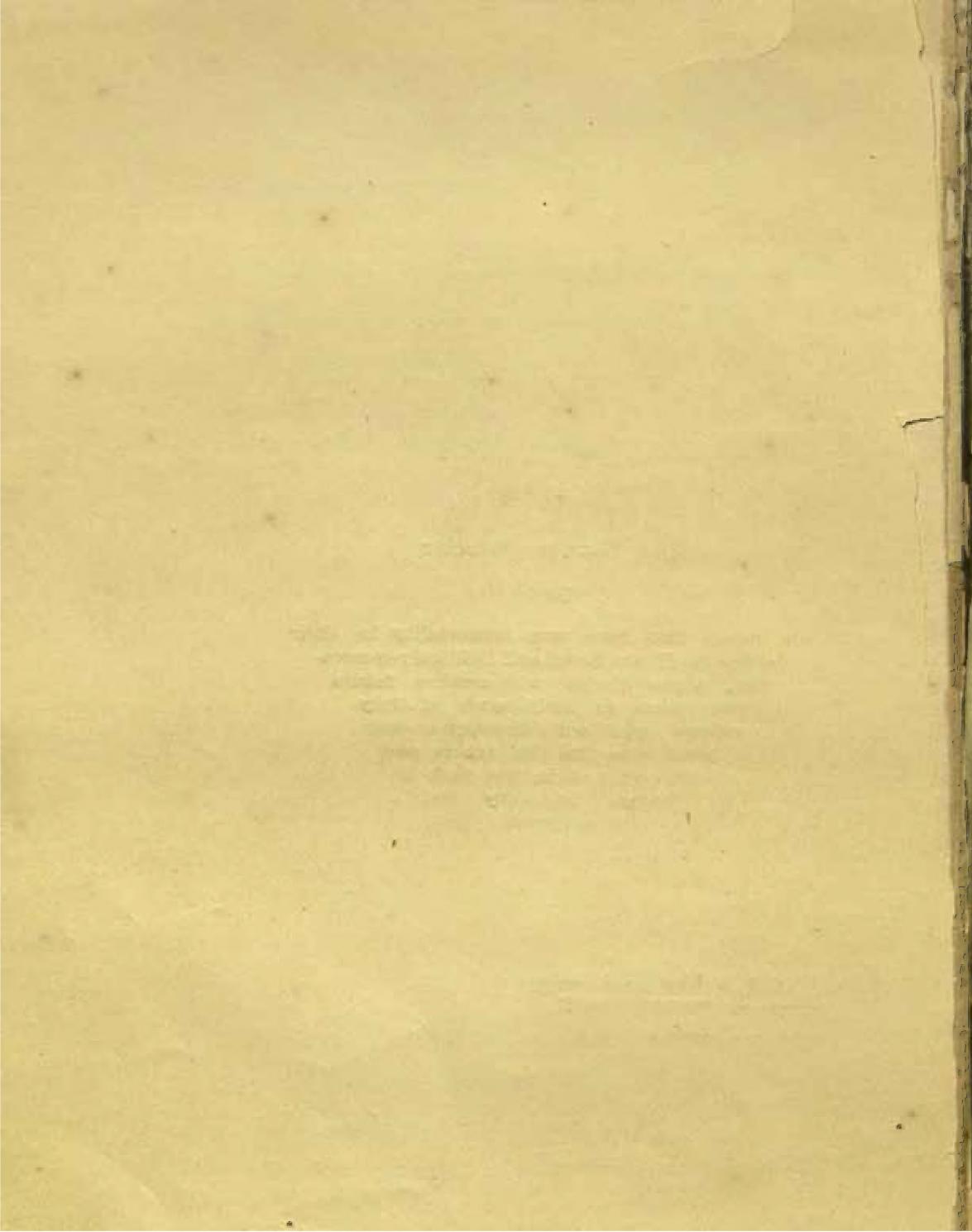
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To
THE SACRED MEMORY
OF

the heroes that have won immortality in their
battles for Hindu Social and Political regenera-
tion, whose glories will awaken future
generations to their sense of duty,
whose spirit will dispel fear and
bring hope for the future and
will guide all in the path of
justice, humanity and
progress.



PREFACE

joining the Post Graduate teaching staff, I have had to devote my time to the study of the constitutional history of Hindu India, a subject in which my interest was created by the late Prof. J. N. Das Gupta, B.A. (Oxon), who was our teacher in the M.A. classes of the Presidency College. Since then, I had to associate myself with the Carmichael Professor of Ancient Indian History, and had to work with him in connection with the first series of lectures he delivered. I had also the good fortune of making the acquaintance of Mr. K. P. Jayaswal of Patna whose lectures on Hindu Polity marked practically a new era in the study of the political evolution of Ancient India.

While lecturing to my students, I prepared the manuscript of this book by an elaboration of a synopsis of lectures prepared for their guidance, in which I proposed to give them a brief outline of the political evolution of India, marking the different phases of development, along with the causes and circumstances that contributed to them. A number of such phases of evolution are clearly discernible. The earliest of these was one in which tribal democracy prevailed, and this was pre-eminently so for the Vedic period. Later on, there was a distinct tendency towards centralisation of authority and the growth of regal power, accompanied with a corresponding decay of popular authority. This tendency became stronger every day till from the VIth Century B.C., a movement for the unification of India was inaugurated. The movement for unity culminated in the Maurya Empire which after a time underwent dismemberment owing to various causes. After centuries of disruption there was the rise of the Gupta Empire. Since its downfall, a spirit of local separatism counteracted any further attempt at union and the struggle for dominion continued for ages. After the fall of the Gurjara-pratihāras, this came to be reduced to mere squabbles for dynastic pretensions and ultimately, the period of chivalric anarchy ended with the Mahomedan conquest.

In constructing an account of all these I have first given a consideration of the primitive institutions of the Aryans, then passed to the age of the Brāhmaṇas and of the sūcias immediately before the rise of the Maurya Empire. Next, I discussed the downfall of that Empire together with the effects of the foreign inroads which disturbed the normal evolution of political life and brought along with it the germs of new ideals and institutions. The reaction which followed and resulted in the rise of the Gupta Empire has been next discussed and then the other succeeding changes and modifications, all these being brought up to the eve of the Moslem conquest of India. Subsequent to that, I have attempted to prove the survival of Hindu institutions during the age of Mussalman rule as well as their modification at the hands of the conquerors. Properly speaking, an account of Hindu political life ought to end here, but, as that will not be complete without an account of the struggles against the foreign conquerors which led to the subsequent resurrection of the Hindus, several chapters have been added with a view to give an account of the successive revivals, the nature of the Hindu-Moslem problem during the earlier age of the Pathan rule, the ideals of the religious reformers like Nānak and Kavirāja, who looked to the problems of politics from the humanistic and universal point of view, and the dream of Chagatī Imperialism which manifested itself in the political principles of Akbar. This has been supplemented by a brief account of the policy of Aurungzeb and the consequent revolt and revival of the Hindus, till their dream of restoring the Empire was shattered by a new foreign conqueror.

My original intention was to discuss the evolution of Political Theories quite separately from the account of successive phases of political life, but, as this stands in the way of realising the inter-relation between political movements and theories fostered by them, and as it often makes us underrate the influence of one on the other, I have made it a point to discuss the lines of evolution during a particular period and to give an account of the political ideas of the period just after it. This, I hope, will be a better exposition and more helpful to all interested in the subject.

Both in connection with the survey of political development as well as that of political theories, I have laid emphasis on the evolutionary aspect of the subject matter. I have tried to make my own ideas clear by giving parallel illustrations from the history of other nations and these have been as a rule added at the end of chapters, separated from the general narrative. This has been done with the purpose that our ideas may not be confused by the analogy of developments elsewhere in which we find some elements of similarity but which owing to divergences of time, environment, or political instinct, never tally with one another. It is the more so in India where social and political development has been on lines quite different from those of the West and only a careful enquiry brings home to us the nature of this divergence,—so much so, that it is often difficult to render the ideas expressed by words of Indian vocabulary by using similar ones from the terminology of the West. The word *Polity*, for instance, never connotes the ideas contained in the word *Rāstra* and it is doubtful whether the word *Rājya* can be safely rendered into English by the word *State*.

In regard to political theories—if we are permitted to use that word with reference to Indian speculations—our difficulties are even greater. We are liable not only to be misguided by the analogies of the West but suffer also from the error of rendering Indian words by common European equivalents. Western analogies often make us forget fundamental differences in our system and stand in the path of our representing ideas and concepts which gained ground in this country. As a result of this, it is difficult very often to be conscious of our own peculiarities and Indian workers in this subject do nothing but read Western ideas into our history.

In undertaking the preparation of this work, I have had the advantage of being preceded by a number of previous workers. Prominent among the works which have already appeared on this subject must be mentioned Mr. Jayaswal's *Hindu Polity*, a similar work by Dr. Narendra Nath Law, and the *First Series of Carmichael Lectures* by Dr. D. R. Bhandarkar. Mr. Jayaswal's book is a pioneer work on the subject

and a store-house of valuable information for future workers. On many points there is room for difference of opinion, yet the work will hold its place for the amount of erudition displayed and the inspiring narrative of an idealistic historian. Dr. Law's book is also of great value, especially the chapters on Royalty and the fine retrospect appended towards the close. The *First Series of Carmichael Lectures*, will also be of great interest, for the sobriety of judgment displayed in it. In regard to Political Theories, we have the works of Mr. B. K. Sarkar and Dr. U. N. Ghosal, but it is unfortunate that I could not go through the more recent work by Dr. Hillebrandt on the subject.

For this publication, I am deeply indebted to my old friend Mr. P. C. Sen, M. Sc., who not only encouraged the idea of publishing it, but did everything possible to enable me to do the same. In spite of all this, however, the work has been delayed by the press and I regret to offer only the first part of it to my readers. The work had to meet with unforeseen difficulties and it will not be possible to offer the second part before the lapse of another six months. This part, which has already been taken in hand, will contain chapters on the Hindu concept of the State as well as on the principles of Indian social evolution and in regard to Hindu political ideal. A number of appendices will be added, discussing important points regarding ancient Indian Chronology, the principles of public administration and other allied matters.

July, 1927.

NARAYAN CHANDRA BANDYOPADHAYA

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WORKS BY THE SAME AUTHOR

1. English Translation of the Cānakya Sūtras—with notes and parallel passages from Hindu religious and ethical literature. Price Rs. 2/-.
2. Economic Life and Progress in Ancient India, Vol. I.—From the earliest times to the rise of the Maurya Empire. (C. O. S.) Published by Dr. N. Law. Well-received by the Press and highly spoken of by Indian and European scholars. Pp. 307. Price Rs. 6/-.
3. Development of Hindu Polity and Political Theories, Vol. I —From the earliest times to the rise of the Maurya Empire. Pp. 328. Price Rs. 8/-.
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1. Kautilya—Vol. II.
2. Development of Hindu Polity and Political Theories—Vol. II.
3. Social Life in India in the Maurya Age.

In preparation.

Economic Life and Progress in Ancient India. Vol. II., including the rearranged contents of the first volume (to the close of the 13th century A. D.)

Economic Life and Progress in Ancient India (Vol. I.)

SOME OPINIONS

Dr. Hermann Jacobi, Bonn.—I have perused those chapters of your book which interest me more directly, and find that it gives an able exposition of the more important historical facts and the opinions of scholars on various problems, at the same time giving an unbiased discussion of them.

Dr. A. Berriedale Keith, Edinburgh.—Your treatise brings together in a convenient and systematic form a large quantity of relevant material and, what is of special value, it displays a sobriety and soundness of judgment which afford every ground for anticipating that your further researches in this interesting topic will be important contribution to our knowledge of the fundamental factors of Indian Economic Life.

Dr. Sten Konow, Oslo.—It is a very interesting and a very great subject which you have taken up and it seems to me that you have approached it in a sound critical spirit * * * I am glad that you are going to let us have a continuation of it and I hope that it will be at a comparatively early date.

Dr. J. Tucci, Rome.—I have read your book and have sent a review to be published in the Journal edited by our University. I appreciate very much the result of your researches which are such a combination of sound scholarship and deep insight into the historical and political evolution of India.

Dr. Washburn Hopkins.—Your first volume of Economic History of India is in my opinion a most excellent work and a good beginning for the whole of the series as you have planned, my only regret being that you have necessarily curtailed your exposition, so that it presents often the appearance of a résumé when a further discussion would have been welcome. I am glad to see that your views historically are so sober and so moderate. In the last few years, some of your countrymen have written works on the History of India, which cause astonishment and pain to the judicious historian. Your work is free of all such faults.

Dr. Ganga Nath Jha, Allahabad.—You have done full justice to the subject.

ERRATA

Page	Incorrect	Correct
21	Milleneim	Millennium
22	Varuna	Varuṇa
23	Thillite	Hittite
40	ब्रात	ब्रात
53	सर्वा	सर्वा
55	ब्राते	ब्राते
57	वहु	वहु
78	पृथिव्या	पृथिव्या
88	देवोः	देवोः
159	ब्रूः	ब्रूः
160	बल	बल
162	बेराज्य	बेराज्य
196	अजविन्दुः	अजविन्दुः
..	विदेहानो	विदेहानो
241	Vahu	Bahu
313	ब्राह्मणः	ब्राह्मणः

Similar mistakes of ब्र and ब्र are to be found in some of the footnotes. These crept in in spite of the best efforts of the author because the distinction between ब्र and ब्र is hardly understood by the press-people especially in bilingual establishments. The more important of these have been noted here and the author craves the indulgence of generous readers for these errors.

Index and bibliography are to be supplied at the end of the book when it is completed.

Development of Hindu Polity and Political Theories

BOOK ONE

PRELIMINARY

Indian Political Evolution Compared with that of the West

THE history of India, like that of many countries of the West, affords us ample material for a comparative study of the political development of communities. Various causes and circumstances, however, prevent our realising it. The lack of a recorded history, the utter absence of a chronology, the quaint commixture of history with fable and myth—all stand in the way of our properly studying the evidences, however scanty, which are furnished by our early religious and political literature. We lose sight of real historical facts which in our eyes seem to merge in myths and these myths again pass into the domain of fable. Accustomed as we are to hear of the absence of free institutions in the East, we reconcile ourselves to our supposed inferiority in this respect and regard these as the exclusive patent of the West. We turn to Greece, to Rome, or to the countries of Northern and Western Europe for a study of free political institutions and regard our own countries as the birth-place and the peculiar habitation of despotic power.

All this, again, seems to receive ready confirmation from the evidences furnished by our later legal and religious literature. The later tendency to deify monarchy as a divine institution, the belief in kings being the mundane counterparts of the great gods, the stories of irresponsible exercise of authority by some despotic Hindu kings, described in later chronicles like that of Kashmere, the spirit of submission to authority, all go to prove the utter absence of free institutions as far as India was concerned. To all superficial observers the force of this evidence appears to be more than conclusive, and the average Indian accepts it without attempting to proceed further.

This, however, is hardly true and a careful study of the ancient Indian records places before us facts which not only prove the contrary but explain the causes of Indian political degeneration. India has passed through all trying vicissitudes of fortune. Beginning with that remote antiquity when the Indian Aryans were settled on the banks of the Indus and the Jumna, till the days when the triumphant might of conquering foreigners enslaved her people, she underwent successive commotions and turmoils, hardly known to other lands. The free communities of the earliest period were exposed to the hostile enemy or were assailed by the ambition of powerful chiefs. Racial differences or those of classes, also had their full play, and all these brought in successive modifications and changes. In the midst of these turmoils, in the midst of the conflict of parties or principles, in the midst of commotions succeeding one after the other, her social and political institutions were shaken to their very foundations. The earlier organisations of her people were modified. Society was repeatedly remodelled, governments were repeatedly reconstructed, and the older and simpler existence passed away.

Repeated foreign incursions led to anarchy, and anarchy paved the way for new social and political reconstruction. Every time, as the Indian tried to resuscitate the social order, he took more care to strengthen the executive power, as a bulwark against anarchy and foreign domination. The desire for protection of life and property, and an eagerness to ensure the continuance of the social order, made the people part with their liberty or the ancient right of self-government. Monarchy strengthened its hands. Repeated turmoils helped the princes to consolidate personal sovereignty and to subvert the ancient democracies. With the working of the process of consolidation the clans disappeared. The small states were all merged into considerable monarchies, which, on account of their size and internal diversity, became unwieldy for control by democratic popular assemblies. Social complexities and religious upheavals destroyed the homogeneity of the people, loosened the bonds of the tribe, and made the task easy for the growth of pure monarchies. Sacerdotalism, also, viewed the problem of political discipline from the standpoint of cosmic order, and extolled the rising monarchical authority.

A critical observer cannot fail to observe the working of these forces in the *Madhyadeśa*, even during the later Brāhmaṇa age. There, Royalty was extolled every day and in course of time came to be regarded as the true governmental system. Complexities in social and religious matters favoured its further development. Then came other changes. With the sixth century B.C., which saw the foundation of powerful empires elsewhere and which also saw social and intellectual commotions culminating in the rise of Buddhism, Jainism and other systems, powerful forces operated in favour of centralisation and absolutism.

The tide of Imperialism grew higher and higher. The working of the forces tending towards absolutism was associated with the movement for the unification of the country, and this culminated in the Great Empire of the Mauryas, which arose immediately with the Greek invasion of the Punjab. That vast edifice, which for a time stood as a bulwark against foreign aggression, was, however, short-lived and crumbled to dust with the inauguration of the theocratic propaganda of Asoka.

India again fell a prey to foreign domination. Her fairest fields became the hunting ground of the savage races of Central Asia. The Bactrian, the Greek, the Scythian, the Parthian and the Kuśāna, successively poured into her plains, and dominated over her people till another upheaval contributed to the rise of the Empire of the Guptas. This, after a period of three centuries, was again assailed by foreign hordes and crumbled to dust. After the defeat of the Hunnish barbarians, rival powers struggled for supremacy. The country was more or less divided into a large number of principalities, some of which remained for ever local powers, while others struggled for Imperial hegemony. The differences of localities became prominent. Dynastic wars and conquests became the order of the day. As for the people, local autonomy and communal self-government more or less ensured the continuance of their life and prosperity. The rulers everywhere became free from popular control. The only checks that operated on them, were the limited character of their authority, the privileges of the sacerdotal or the military orders, or the chances and fears of successful popular risings. Politically, the people ceased to exist, their destinies were left to be moulded by their rulers. This became the general rule. In some of the principalities, the

arrogance of princes waxed higher and higher. The absence of constitutional checks to their authority enabled them to assume the role of irresponsible despots, and they often perpetrated tyrannies which disgrace the annals of any country.

From the above it would appear that India was not always the home of despotic authority. As we shall see very soon, the early Indian communities were as free and democratic as their brethren elsewhere. Then, gradually, their condition was changed. The same forces which operated in Greece and Rome or which subverted the free Teutonic institutions and helped the rise of the divine monarchies of the Middle Age, acted in India also. As a result of these, similar changes were brought in. Democracies gradually faded into insignificance. Limited royal authority made place for irresponsibility. The people ceased to be masters of their own destinies and became slaves of their rulers. Yet the history of Indian political institutions has something to speak on behalf of the genius and temperament of her people. For though there was a change, yet, Monarchy never became so irresponsible as in Europe after the Reformation. The king was venerated—his office was highly extolled—his functions were compared to those of the rulers of the universal forces—the Devas, yet the Indian people never accepted the king as the counterpart or the vicegerent of the omnipotent Deity. Nor did India ever see any Caesar cult as we find in the history of decayed Rome after the world conquest, and no prince dared to pretend to be invested with “the right divine of princes to govern wrong.”

Monarchy was not the only form of government. Republics, too, existed—perhaps as numerous and as potent as in the Western world. Their history is lost to us. We have neither

detailed records of the vicissitudes of party fortune—or the services of eminent popular leaders. Yet, no one can deny their continued existence for ages or the true character of their pluralistic political discipline. When their history is properly studied, it will be found that they were not a whit inferior to those of the Western world. Indeed, some of them existed for as long a period as Athens at least. In some other cases, in spite of a lack of historical details, there is evidence enough to prove their continued existence for longer periods.

For a proper study, with a view to prove the above statements, we must begin with an examination of the early Aryan political institutions and note the influences of the environment, the political forces operating and the changes introduced, with the spread of the race over the plain of Āryāvarta. Next, we shall gradually note the social and political forces contributing not only towards the decay of primitive democratic institutions, but the evolution of a higher type of monarchy, descending in hereditary succession, though still retaining the fiction of popular election or choice. In this connection we shall proceed with a study of the Vedas and the Brāhmāṇas and take into account the confirmatory evidence of the Epics which, though repeatedly modified and rehandled, preserve a very old tradition.

After a study of these, we shall note the leading characteristics of each of the succeeding ages, observing the political forces working in them, and see how, after a period of conflict, monarchial power becomes supreme. After an historical survey of the evolution of Hindu polity, we shall pass on to a consideration of political theories and ideas which gained ground in India and which on their turn acted and reacted on the popular mind and

influenced the subsequent political life of the country. With a view to a systematic study of the above, we shall try to examine the character of social life, or find out the principles underlying the social evolution of India. The relation between social life and politics will be next considered, together with a history of political speculation in the country or the schools of political thought that gradually arose out of the teachings of socio-ethical discipline. We shall next pass on to the study of the Hindu concept of the state or its functions, and the duties which the Hindus ascribed to the governmental authority. These will be succeeded by an enquiry into the speculations relating to the origin of Society, of Sovereignty or of royal power. The Indian concept of law or the legal theory of Hindu kingship will then be discussed in detail. In a subsequent part we shall discuss the main principles on which Public Administration was carried on in India—the various branches of Administration and the machinery of governance.

In course of the survey of Hindu political theories, an attempt will be made to point out the leading features of Indian political evolution. At the same time, while we shall try to point out the similarity between Indian political theories and those of the West, we shall make it a point to mark those features which are peculiar and original to the Indian intellect. European scholars have often harped upon the deficiency of the Indian intellect in political speculation. Many have lamented it while admitting the excellence of Hindu philosophy. Some have gone so far as to say that India had no politics and the Indian genius was deficient inasmuch as the Indians cared little for material advancement. Here an attempt will be made to show that they were not lacking in interest in

matters relating to the affairs of the world, and devoted as much attention to the consideration of social and political matters as the Western thinkers of the middle ages or those succeeding them. They often attempted to solve supremely important social questions or topics of politics, and speculated on the origin of sovereignty—the relation between the state and the individual, the functions of Royalty or the social aspect of political life, as intelligently as the Western thinkers. In some cases it would appear that they prove their originality or superiority over their Western brethren.

II

Sources of Indian Political History or of Thought

It is indeed our misfortune, that the Indian intellect, while it devoted its energies to the cause of Metaphysics and Philosophy, did nothing to preserve a systematic account of the whereabouts of the progenitors of the race. The Historic spirit, so prominent among the Semite or among the nations of the West, was deficient in the Indian Aryan. The difficulties of the historian wishing to construct a systematic record of the past is heightened by the absence of Epigraphic or Archæological records and monuments, which are so prominently lacking in India, till we come to the age of Asoka, the Maurya Emperor, who made himself memorable to posterity by his fine instructive edicts and inscriptions in the cause of Buddhist propaganda. The lack of these records is often due to the climate which preserves monuments of perishable materials but little, to the lack of stone or other imperishable materials in many places of the northern plain, or to the absence of the instinct or custom of preserving memorials to the dead, which still obtains in modern India.

We are, therefore, entirely dependent, so far as the earlier and from the point of view of political greatness, more glorious period, is concerned, upon literary records, some of which give us pictures of contemporary social life while some only preserve

non-contemporary traditions of past ages. Prominent among these latter are the Epics and Purāṇas or the various other types of literature, like the Jātakas originally based on the folklore of the country, but assimilated and preserved in the religious literature of some of the Indian religious sects. Of these literary records, chronologically, the Vedas are the earliest sources of Indian political history. They are, as is well-known to all, collections of hymns, addressed by the Indian seers and sages to the deities whom they worshipped. We do not know whether we have them in their original form, but as we have them, they are in the various Samhitā collections. Of these old Samhitā collections, we have at present a few coming down to us, by far the larger number of these having perished. Among these again, the Rig-Veda collection is supposed to represent the oldest material, though some scholars have often ascribed a greater antiquity to the Sāma hymns,^{*} whose archaic language was attributed to their greater antiquity. Whether older collections of religious formulas or hymns existed is difficult to decide, but philological considerations make it clear that the Nivids or Nigadas, of which fragments occur in the Brāhmaṇas or are referred to in the hymns, were the predecessors of the highly polished and developed hymns of the Samhitās. The Rik-hymns, especially those of the tenth or last book, though mainly religious in their character, often throw some side-lights on the social and political life. The hymns seem to be familiar with the region of the *Sapta Sindhabhā* and this extends in the east to the Yamunā, Ganga, and the Sarayu. Of the various Rik collections only one, the Sākala Śākhā, exists. The Sāma Veda, with the exception of a few

* Weber—History of Indian Literature pp. 9, & 64—65.

hymns, seems to be based on material mainly drawn from the Rik collection. Of the hymns which do not occur in the Rik we have nothing special to note, no new information being furnished. The various Yajus collections written partly in prose and partly in verse, the counterparts of many of which occur in the Rig-Veda, contain directions for the Adhvaryu priests who directed the sacrificial management. The Yajus collections throw new light on the socio-political condition of a greater part of Āryāvarta which by that time came under Aryan occupation. The Atharva hymns, in two great recensions, show a familiarity with the greater part of Āryāvarta extending from the borders of Gāndhāra to Aṅga and Magadha, and are supposed to be more modern, since many of the Atharva hymns seem to be based on those of the Rik. But the Atharva as well as the Yajus collections both contain very old material, often older than many Rik hymns.

It is difficult to determine the date of the Vedas. Orthodox Hindu tradition scoffs at any idea of fixing the chronological limits to the Divinely revealed (*Apauruseya*) hymns. The hymns themselves furnish us with no chronological data, except those that can be gathered from a linguistic or philological consideration, or some supposed astronomical data occurring in the hymns. From a consideration of these, however, different scholars have come to different conclusions. The late Lokamānya Bāla Gangādhara Tilak in his great work Orion tried to utilise these astronomical data and thereby sought to prove that some of the hymns of Rig-Veda existed as early as the 4000 B.C.* Prof. Jacobi adheres to the view that the oldest Rik hymns

* Tilak. Orion—pp. 206–210.

existed as early as 4000 B.C. The late Dr. Martin Haug came to the conclusion that the Rik hymns were composed between 2000 and 1500 B.C., and at the same time he pointed out that the well-developed and polished Rig-Veda hymns were not the earliest compositions of the Vedic Aryans, but were preceded by the Nigadnas, Nividis and the Ahabs, fragments of which still exist in the Brāhmaṇas and which are referred to in the Vedic hymns themselves.*

There is, however, another set of scholars who are in favour of bringing the age of the Rig-Veda hymns to a more modern, though still ancient age. Prominent among these may be mentioned the names of Dr. Oldenberg, Prof. A. B. Keith and Prof. Macdonnell. Oldenberg seems to believe that the Rig-Veda was composed about 1100 to 1000 B.C. while Keith and Macdonnell would refer the composition of the hymns to the period between 1400 and 1200 B.C.

While we cannot accept any of these views as representing the exact truth or even an approximate estimate of the date of the Vedas, we may possibly utilise some data furnished by orthodox historical traditions as recorded in the Epic or the Purāṇas. A detailed discussion of this is out of place here, but yet we may draw the attention of scholars to the fact that a comparison of the prominent names of the Rig-Vedic kings and those of the Kuru line as given in the Mahābhārata, shows that the Epic kernel is nothing but a traditional history of the latter part of the Vedic Age. This will receive confirmation if we compare the legends relating to heroes like Santanu and Devāpi, Dhṛitarāshtra,

* Haug's Introduction to the *Ait. Br.*; See also Orton, p. 206. Tilak holds the same view, and he assigns them to the period 6000—4000 B.C.

or Pañkṣit which occur in the Rig-Veda or the other Sambitās and Brāhmaṇas. Many of the Vedic patronymics occur in modified form in the Epic.

From these we may come to the conclusion that some of the hymns containing these common names were composed when the events in the Mahābhārata took place. In regard to the date of these latter, we may put our faith in the paurāṇika tradition about a fixed interval subsisting between the Kurukṣetra battle and the coronation of the Nandas. Though, there may be differences as to the length of above, we may take this to be 1015, a reasonable interval, which is borne out by the list of kings furnished by the Purāṇas. Elsewhere, the readers may find a detailed discussion but here we take it for granted that the Kurukṣetra battle took place in the 15th century B.C. A similar date is arrived at from the study of the data furnished by the recorded position of planets or supposed references to the contemporary equinoctial position in the Epic. From these we may come to the conclusion that portions of the Rig-Veda in their present form existed as early as the 17th or 18th century B.C. since we must make concession for the lapse of seven generations of which an account is given. The older hymns must have been composed prior to the age 2500-1700. For the Nivids and the Nigadas, fragments of which still exist, we must make allowance for another 500 years or more.

As regards the date of the Brāhmaṇas, it would be difficult

The Brāhmaṇas and the literature subsidiary to the Vedas. to draw any line of demarcation between the period of their composition and those of the hymns. The Brāhmaṇas often contain older materials than the mass of Rig-Veda hymns and probably

they underwent modification and their language was modernised to keep pace with the changes in the spoken dialect. Taken as a whole they may be regarded as belonging to a later period and this may be taken to extend from 1800 B.C. to 1000 B.C.

As to the literature subsidiary to the Vedas, e.g., the Śrauta and Gṛhya Sūtras or other allied literature, there is the same difficulty, though it is lessened by the fact that they are undoubtedly post-Vedic or post-Brāhmaṇic. In spite of this however occasionally the material utilised is very old. Their date may be taken to be pre-Buddhistic and to lie between 1200 B.C. to 700 B.C. The Dharmasūtras are certainly pre-Buddhistic, so far as the material is utilised or so far as the picture of social life is taken into consideration. In their present form they are certainly Pre-Kauṭilyan and as such existed prior to the fourth century B.C.

The next great literary source of evidence is the grammatical work of Pāṇini. The sūtras of that great writer throw much light on the political and social condition of contemporary India. Pāṇini's date is a disputed one. According to Dr. Goldstucker and Sir R. G. Bhandarkar, he must have flourished not later than the 7th century B.C. Other scholars, however, point to the use of the word *Yavana* (*Yavuṇād Lipyām Yavāṇī*; IV. 1. 49.) and identifying the Yavanas with the Greeks, bring the date down to the 4th century B.C. when the Yavanas or the Greeks came to India. This lower date of Pāṇini is absolutely unacceptable. The bulk of the Sūtras are certainly pre-Buddhistic, though here and there we may have covert allusions to the sect founded by Mahāvīra or to that of Maskari Gocāla. The author of the sūtras must have thus lived not later than the seventh century B.C.

The Sūtras of Pāṇini

After Pāṇini, we come to the Buddhist canonical literature, which gives us much information as to the state of society or of political life in contemporary India. Though it is supposed by orthodox Buddhists that this literature is contemporaneous with the Great Buddha, yet internal evidence shows that this assumption is not borne out by facts. The tradition recorded might occasionally be taken to belong to the sixth century B.C., but the literature which has come down to us is certainly the result of successive redactions and modifications. The oldest material furnished by the literature is that contained in parts of the Vinaya Piṭaka, especially the Āṭṭaka and Pāṭiyana Vaggas. The bulk of the Nikāyas is not much older than the time of the Great Emperor Aśoka, who lived in the third century B.C. To the same period must belong the Mahāniddesa commentary and the Thera and Therī gāthās. The Jātakas which are but Buddhist adaptations or modifications of the folklore of pre-Buddhistic India, comprise one mass of non-contemporary source of evidence. Though they were reduced to their present form in the sixth century A.D. in a place far removed from northern India, they contain glimpses of the social life of a very ancient period which is often pre-Buddhistic. Occasionally, historical traditions find place in them which are contemporary with the Great Buddha.

The date of the Epics the Rāmāyana and the Mahābhārata presents similar difficulties. Based on imme-

The Epics.

memorial traditions relating to the Solar and Lunar dynasties of Ayodhyā and Delhi, these in their present form, are the products of successive redactions or rehandlings. Each contains traditions and records belonging to the Vedic or Brāhmaṇic period, though in course of time later materials were

engrafted on them. Older books recording the tradition seem to have existed but these are now lost. They seem to have been reduced to their present form during a period which must be taken to extend from the sixth century B.C. to the fifth century A.D.

Next to all these, we have the evidence supplied by the *Arthaśāstra*, the *Manusārphitā* and the metrical *Smṛtis*. The *Arthaśāstra* which is professedly written by Kautilya, the Minister of Chandragupta Maurya, gives us a picture of social life and government in northern India during the fourth century B.C. This date of the work has been disputed by many European scholars on very flimsy grounds but these have been very ably met by a number of Indian scholars, and we may safely draw the conclusion that the *Arthaśāstra* gives us pictures of social and political life of the fourth century B.C.*

The *Manusārphitā* in its present form, belongs to the *Suṅga*-*kāṇva* period of Brahmanical re-action, while the other *Smṛties* belong to subsequent periods varying from the first to sixth century A.D. Thus the present *Yāgñavalkya Smṛti* must have been composed in the third century A.D. and contains directions bodily taken from the *Arthaśāstra*. Viṣṇu belongs to the third or fourth century A.D. The fragments of Brhaspati or Kātyāyana approximately belong to the same age, while Nārada must be referred to a later period.

The Kāmaudaka Nīti must have been composed not later than the fourth century A.D. The Śukra-nīti-sāra in its present

* For these refutations see the articles of Dr. N. Law and R. Sharma Sastry in the Calcutta Review, (1924-25); also K. P. Jayaswal—Hindu Polity.

form must have been written towards the close of the Hindu rule in India. (eighth or ninth century A.D.) In addition, we have later Nibandhas or works composed during the Mussalman occupation of India. The dates of these will be discussed in their proper place.

Archaeological records become plentiful from the time of the Emperor Asoka. The rock and pillar edicts of the great emperor are the oldest extant of such records. As we pass on, these become more numerous both in Northern and in Southern

Archaeological records India. The majority are dated, but some present difficulty as to their dates since the dates are often in eras unknown, or in regnal years. Coins, too often help us in deciding the age of kings. Occasionally the inscriptions, legends or figures on them throw much light on the political organisation or life of the country.

Last of all, we must take into consideration the foreign accounts of India. These, occasionally, come to our assistance and make up for the deficiency of the historical spirit of the Indians. The Greek accounts of Maurya India ascribed to the ambassador Megasthenes and now existing only in fragments, as well as the account of the travels of Fahian, Itsing or Hiuen Tsang, clear many important details of history and throw light on the picture of the otherwise unrecorded past.

Considerations as to the early history of the Vedic Aryans

NOTHING definite is known about the early history of the Aryans. We have neither historical records nor even authentic tradition which can throw any light as to the fact whether the Vedic Aryans were an autocthonous people or came from outside. Moreover, very little is known as to the date of the settlement of the race in the plains of Hindusthan or the valleys of the Indus. It is only when we come to the Vedic hymns that we find details about the social and political life of a well cultured race with a ready-made civilization far in advance of that among primitive peoples. The composers of the hymns call themselves Aryans in opposition to a people with whom they were in constant enmity and who are described in the hymns as a dark-skinned people with flat nose. Scholars hold different views on those two points. In the absence of authentic records or evidences they have relied mainly on inferences based upon circumstantial evidences and have attempted thereby to construct a history of the Vedic Aryan people. The philological affinity of the Sanskrit language with those of Western and Eastern Europe, furnished a clue to them. This similarity in language appeared to them to be due more or less to the racial affinity, which in the remote past existed between the forefathers of the Indian people, and the ancestors of the European nations.* Gradually, this became the

* One of the earliest to popularise this theory was the late Prof. Max Müller in his lectures on the Science of Language and the Survey of Languages as early as 1860.

accepted opinion of western savants and they came to believe in the past existence of a race, e.g., the Indo-Europeans, comprising the forefathers of the Indian Aryans, the Iranians, the Greeks, the Romans, the Kelts, Teutons and the Slavs. The existence of such a race was not only proved by philological affinities, but was confirmed by the evidence of comparative mythology or of religion. The theory was propounded and elaborated in the hands^{*} of Pott, Lassen, Max Müller and a host of other eminent scholars who devoted their energies to the study of the Indo-European culture and philology. The existence in the remote past of such a race

being almost regarded as certain, the vedic
Aryans came to be regarded as immigrants
from outside to India, and some of these
scholars devoted their energies to the finding out of the "Original Home" of the Indo-European peoples. At one time various regions of Asia, especially of Central Asia, were favoured more or less as the home of this people, though there were differences among the scholars as to the exact location of this original home. After a decade or two, a number of scholars came who

* Thus Adelung regarded Kushmir as the cradle of mankind. He was followed by J. G. Rhode who looked upon Bactria as the original home of the human race, and later on, Pott, Lassen, and Grimm, all expressed their adherence to the Central Asian theory. It was popularised by Max Müller, Pictet, and Schleicher (1847 to 1862).

The earliest to raise their voice against this Central Asian hypothesis were Latham (1851), Fick (1868), Benfey, Geiger (1871), and Cuno (1871). Cuno attempted moreover to demolish the assumption that Aryan blood was co-extensive with Aryan speech. He was followed by Schmidt whose new explanation as to the origin of the different languages, dealt a mortal blow to the old Migration theory. In 1880, Ueltzsch denied altogether the existence of a uniform Aryan speech. Though for some time the older hypothesis retained many adherents, yet scholars more and more came to favour the European origin of the Aryans. Prominent among these were F. Müller (1873), Pasche (1878), Lindenschmit (1880), Schrader, and Penka.

favoured the view that the original home was in Europe and not in Asia.

Further enquiry brought in a greater divergence of opinion. Anthropologists, who during the earlier period of the history of the science, attached great importance to linguistic affinity as proving the connections of the races, more and more came to discard the view that race is intimately connected with language. Some of the pre-eminent among them recognised that the present races of the world are more or less mixed and that language is more often no sure test of race. Prominent among these were the French savants, Broca and Topinard, and of late these views are gaining ground day by day. The term Aryan, came to be regarded as merely one, forced into the domain of Anthropology, by philologists (see Hadden and Keave, p. 419).

While the scepticism of the anthropologist, and consequently of some philologists went on increasing, the labours of archaeologists came to be rewarded with hopes of success arising out of the surer data of inscribed monuments and remains of the races of the past. Excavations everywhere brought to light monuments and records, which put the scholars in a better position and enabled them to dispense with "*a priori*," hypotheses and assumptions and furnished them with new clues to the mystery of the past. Thus it was in Egypt, in Crete, and more recently in Western Asia. In Egypt the Tel-el Amarna letters were discovered as early as

New archaeological finds. 1880. These remarkable documents threw new light on the races of Western Asia, and were soon followed by more interesting finds. Thus as early as the year 1905-6, the efforts of

M. Winckler² led to the discovery of the remarkable records dug up at Boghaz Kyōi, the seat of the Hittite culture, and these brought to light accounts of races akin to the Vedic Aryan. They revealed the existence of races like the Mitanni or the Kassites, who in the second millennium B.C. were settled in various places in Western Asia. Each of these had a considerable civilisation, used metals, and had made a considerable advance in agriculture and the arts. The Kassites ruled in Babylonia which their leader Gandash captured in 1740 B.C. from the last monarch of the First Dynasty of Babylon.

The new conquerors of Babylon were of a different stock and undoubtedly belonged to the Indo-European race. They seem to have been Aryans and ruled as the ruling oligarchy in southern Mesopotamia for more than six centuries. Some of the names of princes of this race have come down to us and they

The Kassites.

have been pronounced to be certainly Aryan, and among their gods, we find names which point to their religion being closely connected with that of the Indian Aryans. Thus, their chief god was Suryash (Sūrya). Two other vedic deities figure among them. Thus the vedic Marut occurs as Maruttash. The word Bugash also denoting the God-head, seems to be akin to the vedic Bhaga.

In regard to the Mitanni, more interesting details have come to light. Not only have we in the Tel-el-Amarna records the names and doings of some of their kings, but we have among these records, the letter of a Mitannian king to a Pharaoh and also the story of marital relations existing between the kings of

² Winckler published a summary of his findings in M. D. O. G. No. 35.

Egypt and the rulers of Mitanni.^{*} The names of many of the Mitanni kings have been found to be Aryan. One daughter of the Mitanni king Dušratta (Daśaratha †) was married to Amenophis IV, and the latter had a son by this Mitanni wife Gilukkhipa. This prince who styled himself Akhenaton, became a devoted worshipper of the sun god and discarded the old Egyptian rites.

The Mitanni
Another important record is in the form of a marriage treaty between the Hittite conqueror Shubbillima and Tushrutha's son Mattiuaza.† We have the enumeration of a large number of Aryan and semitic deities whose blessings are invoked. Of the deities of the former class, we have the names of the vedic Indra, Varuna, and the Nāsatya twins.

Closely connected with the Mitanni were the Harri or Arri, whose kings Artatama and Shutarna were the enemies of the former. The Harri also were Aryans, as they have been pronounced to be, from a consideration of some of their recorded names.

* Winckler published a summary of his findings in M. D. O. G. No. 35 (1907) and again in O. L. Z. (1910). The entire text of the Hittite treaty was published in 1916 and a translation of it appeared in the American Journal of Semitic Languages and Literature Vol. XXXVII, April, 1921.

† This remarkable document, consisting of 512 lines, remains yet undeciphered excepting the seven lines which are written in Babylonian cuneiform. This strange script has not yet been deciphered.

Tushratha was done to death by one of his sons, and thereupon Mitant declined. A son of the late Mitanni king Mattiuaza won the favour of the Hittite king Shubbiluliumma who restored him to his kingdom and gave him his daughter. Then, in connection with the marriage we have invocation of blessings in this treaty. The spirit of this treaty is also interesting, for Shubbiluliumma allows his son-in-law freedom to take as many concubines as possible, but reserves for his daughter, the position of chief queen, while the right to succession is reserved for the child of his wife.

In regard to the Hittites themselves, their racial identity is yet far from being cleared. They seem to have contained diverse sections racially different among them and some of these were Aryan-speaking. Thus, more recently the researches of scholars have proved the existence of some of the Sanskrit odd numerals.*

* e.g. *Aika*, *tryi*, *Punza* and *Satta*. It is to be noted that the in 's' *Satta* is not changed into 'h' as in the Iranian. These words occur along with a Sanskrit word *Vartana* in an inscription describing horse-dealers from the East. The horse was an animal the use of which was not known to the Egyptians or the Babylonians. The Egyptians knew the use of the horse from the Hyksos conquest. The Babylonian language had no word meaning horse. Later on, it was designated as the "ass of the East." See Jensen: *Sitzungsber preuss Akad.* p. 367, Sommer, *Boghazkyoi Studien* 4, also Hugo Winckler, *Mittheilungen der Deutschen Orient Gesellschaft* et al.}

Emil Forrer: Z. D. M. G. Die nebst Sprachen der Boghaz-kyoi inschriften. This treaty was discovered by Winckler at Boghaz-kyoi in 1906. His partial translation came out in 1910 and in 1916.

For the full account of this treaty, see Lockenbill—American Journal of Semitic Languages, 1921, Vol XXXVII April.

The Indo-Iranian Contact and Settlement in India

THE evidence thus furnished above is undoubtedly interesting, for, though it does not help in fully clearing up the racial identity of the vedic Aryans, or their original home, we may at least know that some sections of the vedic Aryans, or some of their close kinsmen were once roaming about Western Asia during the second and third milleniums B.C. and that some at least settled down to found monarchies in various regions, till they were displaced by other races.

The next historical evidence we have, is that supplied by the evidence of the sacred books of the Iranians. As proved by the late Dr. Martin Haug, Dr. R. L. Mitter and various other scholars, there was a strange similarity existing between the religion and ritual of Iranians and the vedic Aryans. This could not be merely accidental, and so far as our inference goes this close resemblance was due either to a common origin or a close contact in the remote past. It is not the place for discussing the question of racial affinity or contact in detail here, but this much is quite clear, that the two races were akin to one another, had lived in close proximity and had followed the same customs and had spoken almost the same language.

Later on, differences had arisen, and the two races had fallen apart. Ethnic and social divergences had widened the gulf of

differences. In the Iranian, elements of Median and probably of Elamite culture had penetrated. Perhaps some religious teacher gave a new turn and shape to these differences. The dualistic metaphysics of Iran, which attributed the creation of the world to the two forces, e.g., of good and evil, arose, and consequently the Deva-worshipping Aryan came to regard the Asura-adoring Iranian as a bitter enemy. The two quarrelled and fought and after a bitter struggle separated, one migrated along the Kabul valley and descended into the Punjab and extended over the plain of Hindustan, the other remained in the old home and developed its own culture in the land of Iran.

Such, probably, was the history of the forefathers of the vedic Indians. We know not whether it may be regarded as true. The time is not yet come when we can pronounce the final word on the race history of the past. At present, our knowledge is not far from being contemptible. To unveil the mystery of the past, scholars are yet to work, to dig up the records of the hoary past which lie shrouded in mystery in the old centres of the Elamite or Median culture, as also in those of Sumer and Akkad. Then, and then only, will be cleared up the veil of mist and uncertainty which remote centuries have cast over vestiges of the past, which have survived in spite of the destructive forces of nature that have acted for ages.

In the next phase of history succeeding that of Indo-Iranian contact, we find the ancestors of the vedic Indians calling themselves Aryans (a term used by two races in history, e.g., the Iranians and the vedic Aryans) settled in India, priding in their hallowed land of the "Sapta-Sindhabah," invoking the assistance of the gods against the enemies that menaced their

culture and constantly praying for prosperity, wealth, children and happiness. All these form the subject-matter of hymns composed by their sages and we have a large number of these coming down to us in collections embodying them and known as the *Sāmhitās* of the Vedas.

The Aryans and their Ethnic Environment

THE vedic records, as we have seen, tell us nothing about the original home of the Aryans nor do they give us a detailed account of the early tribes or clans, or their ruling families. It is only incidentally that the hymns give us occasional details of the social or political life of the people. From these we find a community divided into a number of tribes hardly settled over a fixed habitation, and constantly moving forward in search of new territory for colonisation and expansion. In the midst of this advance, constant wars were taking place between the advancing settlers and their enemies, the original owners of the soil. The latter, at least some sections of them, had attained a considerable culture, were organised in tribes, had forts of wood and stone, had bands of warriors to protect their own interests, and had accumulated gold and silver.

These fought with the new-comers, and the war continued with varying success on both sides. Ultimately, however, the new settlers became victorious. The conduct of the struggle is described in the Vedic hymns and though we have no systematic account, we have occasionally the names of the heroes on either side, and descriptions of important battles.

The enemies among whom vedic Aryans lived seem to have differed not only in colour and speech but also in manners and

religion. The hymns speak repeatedly of the Dāsas* and Dasyus† and describe them in terms of contempt generally used by a conquering race to the conquered one. The words still survive in our literature and mean a slave or an outlaw. Some Vedic passages throw light on the ethnic characteristics of the earlier

Ethnic characteristics races with whom the Aryans had to fight of the Aborigines.

Thus, many of these describe the enemies as having been of dark complexion while others describe them as being of short stature, flat nosed (*anās*)‡ and of hostile speech (*mṛdhra-rāc*) § Other passages constantly dwell upon the godlessness of the enemies, their faithless nature and their constant enmity. In many others passages Indra and the other gods of the Aryans are praised for having enslaved them or driven them to the hills.

Judging from all these we may come to the conclusion that these descriptions point to the existence of the Kol peoples or of

* Dāsa—The dāsas are also described as having their own forts (*Sāradih purāḥ*) and their clans (*Visah*). Their religion was also different. See Vedic Index I. 357. The dāsas had considerable wealth. The leading dāsas mentioned are Ilbisa, Cumuri Dhuni, Pipru Varcin and Sambara.

† Dasyu—The origin of the word is doubtful, but it is quite clear that the term was applied to a race of hostile enemies. The Dasyus are mentioned in many places and are often described as a *karman* (rite-less R. V. X. 22.8) a-*devayu* (indifferent to the gods R. V. VIII. 70. 11) a-*brahmaṇ*, a-*yajean*, a-*vrata* or anya-*vrata* and *deva-pīyu* (reviler of the gods.) See Vedic Index I. 347.

‡ Anās.—The meaning is quite clear. It means noseless and probably refers to the flat-nosed aborigines.

The use of these words is almost similar to that of the slave or serf applied by the victorious Teutons to the early Slavonians.

§ Mṛdhra-rāc.—The meaning is not quite clear. According to some, it meant men of hostile speech or unintelligent speech. The expression is used towards the aborigines, the Papis and even to the Aryan Purus (R. V. VII. 18-13.)

the pre-Dravidian substratum which even now forms the predominant element in the population of India.

While this is generally true as regards the mass of the pre-Aryan population, there is indeed unquestionable Vedic evidence proving that if the majority of the people were savages, there were communities of a different character altogether. Some of these seem to have undoubtedly attained a considerable civilisation and this fact is proved by the constant references in the Vedas to their cattle and gold which Aryans coveted. In more than one place, we find prayers to Indra that the devotees of that god might have all their gold, their cattle or the wealth they possessed. Such passages prove beyond doubt that at least some sections of the enemies were metal-using people,

Civilized people prior to the Aryans. who owned herds of cattle and were civilized enough to know the value of gold and silver.

In many other places we have references to the forts of these enemies and occasionally these are described as *ayasi* or made of iron. As we shall see later on, there existed leaders or kings among these people who had numerous forts and fighting men of their own and in the case of one of them, the non-Aryan chief *Sambara*,* he proved a formidable foe to Divodāsa. Their alliance was coveted by many Aryan kings.

The question may now arise as to the identification of these civilised communities. There was indeed a time when the majority of the European scholars believed that the pre-Aryans were mere savages, but now that pre-historic studies are advancing a little, we have certain though hazy notions of

* *Sambara*.—Other such hostile chiefs are mentioned, e.g., Cumuri, Śuspa, Pipru, Varcin and some others. *Sambara* is described as having had 100 forts. He was an enemy of *Divo-dāsa*, who gained the victory only with Indra's aid.

the existence of a pre-vedic civilisation in India. The following questions now arise :—

1. Who were these civilised peoples who lived in Northern India at the time of the Aryan settlement or prior to it?
2. Were they the forefathers of the Dravidians?
3. What was the influence which they exercised on the Aryan culture, especially on their political institutions?

It is difficult to give clear answers to these questions but many scholars have inclined to the view that the more civilised sections were Dravidians, while the rest belonged to the pre-Dravidian races of India. At the present time, philological and ethnological evidences go far to prove the existence of the Dravidians in Northern India in very early times. Not only have scholars detected the existence of isolated Dravidian-speaking communities like the Gonds or the Oraons in Northern India, but have come to the conclusion that even the Brahuis* of distant Beluchistan are racially and linguistically a branch of the Dravidian people.† Over and above this, a number of Dravidian words have been detected in the Vedic and post-vedic Aryan speech.‡

Now, when we come to discuss the influence of pre-Aryan cultures upon the Aryans polity, we admit that it is quite possible

* Brahuis.—For a detailed account of the Brahuis of Beluchistan, who form a "Linguistic Island" in the midst of peoples speaking Indian or Iranoid tongues, see "The Brahui Language" by Denis Bray—pp. 8 to 19.

† Caldwell History of the Dravidian Language—pp. 567-79.

‡ M. Sylvain Levi's Article in Journal Asiatique (1924). See also Carmichael Lectures, series 1, chap 1.

and probable that such influences have been exerted both directly and indirectly. Whenever two races meet, they are sure to be influenced by each other. In India, as elsewhere, borrowings have taken place and the process is still going on. Some scholars,

Sumero-Dravidian however, go further than this and attempt to contact. derive the culture of the Aryans entirely from the Dravidians. One of the first to propound such a theory in more recent times has been Mr. Hall, the author of "Ancient History of the Near East," who, in investigating the origin of the Sumerian culture, attempted to identify the originators of the Sumerian culture with the Dravidians. The latter, according to him, migrated to Sumeria, either by the land-route along the coast of Beluchistan and the Persian Gulf, or went thither by sea. Hall's theory is based more or less on the comparison of the ethnic type represented by the early Sumerian statues with the average facial type of the modern Dravidians. Mr. Hall went further than this and made the bold statement that the "Aryan Indian owed his civilisation and downfall to the Dravidians." (P. 174-footnote 3).

This theory, though bold and ingenious, however, rests on no solid foundation. The attempt to trace the origin of Indian culture is commendable, as well as that to establish a connection between India and Sumeria, two ancient centres of human culture, and this is suggested by many circumstantial evidences. Yet such bold explanations are hardly scientific. India has been an earlier centre of human culture than is ordinarily supposed to be. Very little has as yet been done to clear the history of past civilizations in India. Archaeological excavations in India are as yet very little advanced. More evidences are forthcoming and these may lead to more startling discoveries.

Thus, very recently, while the question of Dravidian influence was being hotly discussed, the excavations in the Punjab and in the Sind valley carried out by Mr. Sahani and Mr. R. D.

Recent sidelights. Banerjee have proved the existence in the remote past (anterior to the Aryan settlement ?)

of a civilised race whose remains consisting of pottery, both unglazed and glazed, figures of animals, clay-seals, coins, burial remains, pots and vessels of various descriptions, have come down to us. These point undoubtedly to the existence of a civilized people who lived many milleniums ago in the Indus Valley. To this must be added the evidences furnished by excavations in the Tinnevelly district or those furnished by the megaliths which are found in so many places in the land of the Dravidian peoples of present-day India. These latter have been studied by eminent scholars like Brucefoote, Rea, Beddie and a number of other scholars. Moreover, a few years ago the labours of Mr. Yazdani of the H. E. H. the Nizam's Government have brought to light the existence of some queer marks on pre-historic pottery found in Rajgir and other places. These have been found to bear close resemblance to the script of the Minoans and other races who belonged, according to Sergi, to the great Eur-African race of the past.

It is idle to waste our time in discussing these, especially when we are examining the early history of Aryan political institutions. Precious and valuable as these remains are, they are sure to furnish a key to the mystery of races and of race-contacts in the pre-historic past. For a scientific enquiry we must wait and work patiently, refraining at the same time from bold and outlandish theories, without any reasonable foundation. Our conclusions must be soberly drawn, and must

rest on clear evidence. Any other theories, however ingenious, should be avoided.

Yet, unfortunately, such *a priori* theories are very common and often arise out of a desire to undermine the past greatness of a race now politically low. Regrettable as it is, this has often been the motive for such bold suggestions hardly based on facts. As for ourselves, while we admit the existence of civilized races in India in the past, we should be careful not to attach importance to such theories. Our knowledge of the past is now too insignificant, and to attempt such easy solutions would be boldness amounting almost to an enormity. Insuperable difficulties stand in our way. First of all, we know nothing about the extent of civilisation of the early Dravidians. Their earliest records show a great influence of Aryan culture on those people while the extent of borrowing from them by the Aryans is very little, as is proved by the evidence of philology. Moreover, we know too little of the beginnings of Aryan culture and even if we believe for argument's sake that the Dravidians were a highly ^{Brilliant conjectures.} civilised people, it would be mere *Fluellen* logic to say that because the Dravidians were a civilised people, the Aryans owed everything to them.*

On the other hand, fair-mindedness and scholarly impartiality is sure to recognize that whatever might have been the locality or the origin of the Aryan culture, it had undoubtedly a continuous connection with a cultural-system existing in the hoary past. If we take the important culture-words of the Aryan vocabulary and examine them with the help of philology, the latter

* For a fuller discussion of the question see the Introduction to Caldwell's Grammar of the Dravidian Languages.

science will prove the existence of language or languages in which the same word occurs in the same or in modified form. Similarly, if we take the words denoting metals, family or kinship, the principal occupations or the chief implements—nowhere a single borrowing can be traced to the Dravidian—but we have counter-parts in the Avestan, the Greek, the Latin, the Teutonic or the Slavonic.

In one of the appendices added, such a comparison will be made to refute the theory of wholesale borrowings from the Dravidians. For the present we regard the theory of Hall and his followers as a piece of brilliant conjecture and refrain from answering the question "who borrowed from whom and to what extent." We have very little means of giving a clear answer and we must wait for further materials.

VI

Aryan vs. Dravidian Ideals and Institutions

As the result of a critical comparison, we recognize, in the Aryan and the Dravidian, two different races with divergent cultures and our conclusion seems to receive confirmation from a study of the socio-political organisation or ideals of the two races. Such a process brings out very boldly the differences between the two peoples and the contrast appears more and more clear to us. These have subsisted and still subsist, in spite of centuries of action and interaction and in spite of the closest possible association. The political ideals as well as the social polity of the two races were different and it would appear from a contrast of the characteristics which still survive. Thus, the one stood for and even now clings to matriarchy, but the other rejects it with contempt and scorn. The Dravid, by nature more conservative and intolerant, sticks to his own institutions and to the practices of his social group with a tenacity entirely absent in the other race. In

Characteristics of the religion, equally imaginative, both worship two races. the deified forces of nature, but while the Dravidian inclines more towards appeasing the malevolent forces of nature, the Aryan with his fondness for abstraction devotes himself more to a rationalistic explanation about the relations subsisting between the Deity and his created world. By nature the Dravidian is credulous and docile while the other is more liable to doubts and questions and given to metaphysical

enquiries. In political life, the Dravidian adheres more to a communistic ideal. He relies less on the state, and more on the efforts of his group, while the Aryan inclines for support upon the central political authority. These are the more prominent characteristics which have survived to our own days. Of course, centuries of blending or association have undoubtedly modified the original state of affairs. Each has been influenced by the other. Each has yielded some of its own to the other. Each has imbibed something from the other. Yet centuries have failed to obliterate the past.

The struggle between the two races with so divergent ideals went on and before long the Aryan became the master (so far as northern India was concerned) of the other race, imparted something of his own culture to the conquered, yet not failing to assimilate something from the other. In the south the culture of the Dravidians retained its individuality, but with the advance of Brahmanical teachers and adventurers, the principles and ideals of the race were also wholly modified.

We have no direct historical account of the political institutions of either race. What was the relative position of the cultures of the two races in this respect must yet remain an open question. It is difficult to trace any direct influence of the Dravidian polity on the Aryan, but this much is quite clear that the presence of a race of cultured enemies modified the course of political development so far as the Aryans were concerned. The influence was partly direct and partly induced by opposition.

With those who regard the Aryans as mere savages but more hardy warriors and point to their martial qualities as the sole cause of their success, we do not agree. The Aryan was intellectually superior. Along with his intellectual qualities he

was a more successful warrior and owed his success equally to these warlike qualities and his higher military organisation. Not only was he an expert in the use of the bow, the arrow or the sword, but he knew the use of the horse and this made him formidable to his enemies. From the Rig-veda we have ample information on this.

We know, moreover, that to protect the body, armours and coats of mail were used. We have repeated mention of the *Khyala*, the *Kavaca*, the *Sipra*, *Drāpi* or the *Piśaṅga*. These were generally of *Ayas* or the third metal which the Aryans used extensively.

To add to these, the Aryan warrior excelled in another branch of warfare, e.g., the use of the horse and chariot. The use of cavalry in war as also of the war-chariot undoubtedly made him superior to the enemy. The chariot was freely used. It was covered with skin or hide of animals. Occasionally, it was covered with metallic plates to protect it from the enemy's weapon. The large use of the chariot caused the growth of a special body of craftsmen, the *Rathakāras*, who came to occupy a specially high social position. War also gave rise to the importance of the military class, the *Kṣatriyas*, as we shall see very soon.

VII

Constitution of Aryan Society and Socio-Economic Organisation

BEFORE we pass on to a study of the political institutions of the Vedic Aryans, we must make some further enquiries about the constitution and organisation of their society. Enquiries of this nature are of supreme importance in connection with the history of the evolution of political life, since political evolution depends to a large extent on the environment as well as social and economic organisation. Minute enquiries being out of place here, we shall merely confine ourselves to a discussion, firstly, as to whether the Vedic Aryans came and settled down in India in one and the same epoch or came in successive waves,

Homogeneity of the Aryans. and secondly—whether socially and politically they were a homogeneous people.

An answer to each of these questions is important but unfortunately lack of proper data makes our task difficult. In the absence of real history, we are compelled to depend either on the interpretation of tradition or on philological or ethnological considerations. As regards traditional (embodied in the Epic or in the purāṇas) accounts, we have in them no explicit references to successive immigrations or settlement in different batches. The traditional accounts, however full of absurdities or fanciful details, contain distinct hints about divergences existing among the great military families or dynasties that ruled in the country. Scholars have detected in these nothing but racial

differences. Mr. Pargiter, the most eminent authority on early Indian chronology, notes for instance, the traditional differences between the *Mānava* dynasties and those of the *Ailas*, and has come to the conclusion, that racially the *Mānavas*, the *Ailas*, and the *Saudyumnas* represent three different racial stocks. His arguments and explanations have been summarised in his more recent publication entitled "Ancient Indian Historical Tradition."^{*} Other scholars have pointed out the clear-cut racial divergences between the two armies which fought on the plains of Kurukṣetra.

Similar theories have been of late developed by other scholars, but these are more or less conjectural and rest on very slender evidence. There are, however, some evidences, in our own literature, which clearly and unmistakably point to the existence of a gulf of differences between the earlier Aryans and batches of later settlers of the same race, who came to the country afterwards. It is needless to mention that we refer to the Vrātyas of whom we have so many references even in the Vedic literature, which records many of their social peculiarities, or those relating to manners and customs.

* Mr. Pargiter's theory is to be found in the XXVth chapter of his work, already cited. He identifies the *Ailas* with the Aryans proper, the *Saudyumnas* with the Mundas and the Mon-Khmer stock, and the *Mānavas* with the Dravidians. The Aryans (*Aili*—Aryan) according to him, entered India from the Mid-Himalayan region. His theory is summed up in pp. 287—302, and his chief arguments are summarised in p. 302.

At the same time he has propounded a new theory about the Brāhmaṇas. According to him, they were originally "connected with the non-Aryan peoples and were established among them when the *Ailas* entered. This is corroborated by the close connection that existed between them and the Daityas Dānavas and Asuras, etc."

Further, it is well known to all students of Indian history or literature, that we have some details, relating to them in the Atharva Veda, in some of the Brāhmaṇas, and in the Śrauta Sūtras. In later times the Vrātyas^{*} came to be identified with those Aryans who neglected sacrificial performances or did not observe the sacramental rites. In the Brāhmaṇas, we have details of the ceremonies and rites for the reclamation of these people and incidentally we find a classification of the Vrātyas together with the causes of their social degradation.

The Pañca-vimśa Brāhmaṇa mentions the *hīna*, the *nindita* or the *nīra medhira* Vrātyas. (XVII. 1—4) while it characterises them as nomads averse to agriculture and commerce, and not observing the rules of *Brahmacarya*.† In the same book, we are again told, that their *grhapatis* were in the habit of wearing turbans (*uṣṇīṣa*), necklaces of silver (*rajata-niṣka*), carried bows (*jyāhroḍa*) and whips (*pratoda*), covered their bodies with black garments (*kṛṣṇaśa*), or with skins (*ajina*), or black and white dress (*kṛṣṇa-valakṣa*). They also had wagons covered with planks (*Vipatha*). Their subordinates also wore peculiar dresses and sandals.‡ The later sūtras add more particulars, but in these we are not interested.

* The original meaning of Vrātya is difficult to find out. From two sūtras of Pāṇini (V. 2. 21, e.g.—त्रायेन जातिं and V. 3. 113 a. t.—त्रातचक्षोरु अन्तियाम्) it would appear that Vrātya was synonymous with Vrātu which Kāśikā explains as नानाजातीया अनियतवृत्तय चतुर्वर्षजीविनः सदा ब्रातः।

† हीना वा पते हीयन् ये तत्त्वा प्रवर्त्तनं नहि व्रात्यर्थं चर्वन् न क्रियन् वर्णिता etc.

Pañca. v. Br. XVII. 1. 2.

‡ उत्ताप्त ग्रन्थादेश लालोटक विषयक फलकाभीष्मः ऋणश्च वासः ऋणवलच्च अजिने रक्षतोनिक्षमद ग्रन्थतः। Pañca. v. Br. XVII. 1. 14

बलुकालानि दामतृपानोत्तरेषो द व दामनौ उपानहो दिष्टहितान्विजितानि Pañca. v. Br. XVII. 1.15.

From their name, it would appear that the *Vrātyas* came in roving bands (*Vrāta*), and this meaning of the word has survived to the last in our classical literature. We have no further details about the locality of their settlement, but it is probable that they became more numerous in the region west of the Sarasvatī, and gradually were consecrated and taken into the fold of Aryan society.

But though most of them were received into the fold of Aryan-dom, the tradition of their previous social stigma survived, and we have evidences of this in the Epic and paurāṇic accounts. In the Epic, the Yādavas are repeatedly stigmatised as *Vrātyas*. Further, we have in the Atharva Veda some more descriptions of the *Vrātyas*, but the language is mystical and the *Vrātya* is identified with the deity. In some places, however, we have evidences of the *Vrātya* being still a wanderer, moving in his cart and wearing the *uṣṇīṣa*.

The real history of the *Vrātyas* is lost to us. But this Importance of the much we can say, that during the age of the composition of the Brāhmaṇas and sūtras describing them, they were sections of the Aryans, still in a nomadic stage. Whether they were batches of earlier or later immigrants, it is difficult to decide, but it is significant to note, that some sections of the *Vrātyas* retained for a longer period their original non-monarchical institutions, as is proved by the history of the *Yadavas*, and of the *Licchavis*, who were *Vrātyas* if we believe in the tradition recorded in the *Manusamhitā*.

The relation of the *Vrātyas* to the other sections of the Vedic Aryans is equally unknown, and with the data at our disposal we cannot proceed any further. But if such records are lacking, philological considerations about the present

vernaculars of India throw light on ethnic differences. Structural differences exist between different groups of Indian vernaculars and these have been taken to point to racial differences. For such an enquiry into the vernaculars we are indebted to the labours of Sir George Grierson, the eminent philologist, who has compiled a Linguistic Survey of India.

As a result of his studies, Sir George has divided the Indian Vernacular languages now spoken by the people into two distinct groups,* e.g.:

(1) The Outer Indo-Aryan Languages—comprising the Kashmīrī, Lahindī, Sindhī, Marāthī, Oṛiyā, Bengali, Bihārī, and the Assamese.

(2) The Inner Indo-Aryan Languages—comprising Western Hindi, Rājasthānī, Gujarātī, Punjābi, Pāhārī. In addition to these he recognises an Intermediate Indo-Aryan group, represented by Eastern Hindi, which falls on the borderland of the two and is the result of the fusion of the two groups.

According to Sir George the origin of diversities between the groups is due to their development at the hands of two groups of peoples, who settled in India during two different epochs, separated by at least several centuries.

The Outer Aryan languages, according to him, represent the dialectical varieties, which arose out of the decay of the language spoken by the earlier race of Aryan immigrants, who once spread over the whole

* Sir George Grierson's latest views on the subject are to be found in the "Bulletin of the School of Oriental Studies," London, Vol. I. Pt. iii., 1920. Cf. also the Introductions to the various volumes on the Linguistic Survey of India. See also the "Imperial Gazetteer," Vol. I. pp. 359—402.

of Western and Northern India, prior to their displacement by another wave. This latter forced itself into the midst of the previous settlers, and with the growth of numbers, the earlier settlers were driven to the fringe-area.

Next to these philological findings, we get some more suggestions from the researches of Ethnologists. As is well-known to all, the anthropometric observations of Sir H. Risley, have resulted in the discrimination of the seven great physical types among the present population of the Indian Empire. Of these, if we except from our consideration the Turko-Iranian type of the North-Western border, the Mongoloid type of the Eastern Himalayas, and the pure Dravidian type of the Central Provinces and of the extreme South in general, we find four different types left viz., the Indo-Aryan type in the Punjab, Rajputana and Kashmir, the Aryo-Dravidian type of the United Provinces and the two other mixed types, viz., the Scythio-Dravidian type of Western India, and the Mongolo-Dravidian type of Lower Bengal. Leaving aside the last two types, we find that the ethnological records, as interpreted by Sir H. Risley, point to two distinct waves of Aryan immigration, the later wave settling in the United Provinces and mixing freely with the local ethnic element, and thereby giving rise to the Aryo-Dravidian type of the United Provinces.

Both the theories* furnish us with important suggestions though it is impossible to accept them *in toto*. They are open

* In regard to the theory of Sir George Grierson, it has been objected to by many eminent Philologists, on phonetic as well as morphological grounds. Among these latter may be mentioned the names of Prof. Stein Konow, M. Jules Bloc and Prof. S. K. Chatterji. All of them are almost unanimous in holding that the common features which Sir George has found out as existing between languages of the two groups, are merely

to severe criticism, especially that of Sir Herbert Risley. First of all, the so-called Aryan type is purely conjectural and next to it Risley attached too great importance to the measurements. He believed in the almost unchangeable permanence of physical characteristics and neglected altogether the influence of the environment or the other influences of the locality of settlement. Moreover, as time goes on, the belief of scientists in physical characteristics, as the true and unerring test of race, is passing away, while many of them are tending to rely more on other factors. Thus, head-length and head-breadth as the true test of

The theories critics.
ed.

race has been practically discarded, complexion is admitted to be liable to variation with the climate, and scholars are becoming more and more alive to the necessity of studying the laws governing the issues of racial mixtures, or the variation of types with the locality of settlement. In accepting the conclusions of Risley we must take all these factors into consideration and be particularly cautious. For the real history of the movements and mixture of races, in the remote past, we are yet to work and wait.

Many anthropologists have of late disputed the views of Risley and some of them have recognized in the North Indian population a strain of the *Homo Alpinus*. Among these, we may mention the name of Rai Bahadur R. P. Chanda, who, in his work "The Indo-Aryan Races" was the first to identify with success the great mass of high-caste Hindus of Northern and Eastern

matters of coincidence, and they refer to their recent forms only. Furthermore, he has failed to note the existence of characteristics which languages of one of his proposed groups possess in common with those of the other. For a discussion of this view, we refer our readers to the work of our esteemed colleague, Dr. S. K. Chatterji, on the Bengali language, which is nearing its publication.

India with the Alpine branch of the Caucasic race, and his view has been accepted by many eminent anthropologists.*

Next to these considerations about the different waves of Aryan immigration, we must enquire into the constitution of Aryan society from another point of view. As is well-known to all, the social organisation of India, from the days of the Vedas, has been characterised by the existence of clear-cut social divisions, which have hardened into what Europeans call caste.

Social organisation—
caste divisions.

As a rule, western authors have denied the existence of social divisions in the Rigveda, and are almost unanimous in attributing the rise of these to gradual cultural and social evolution. They have explained away traditional references to caste in Vedic and post-vedic literature as later fabrications. By far the greater number of European scholars, prominent among whom are the names of Roth, Weber, Max Müller, Zimmer, Muir, Benfey, Aufrecht and Senart, identify themselves with this view. Some of them go so far as to deny the existence of caste in the Rig-vedic hymns and explain away the evidence of the Puruṣa-sūkta, as being late and unreliable. On the other hand, some eminent scholars like Kern, Haug, Ludwig and Oldenberg have maintained the existence of caste divisions even in the earliest period. Ludwig went even so far as to point out that the social organisation of the vedic period was not dissimilar to that which existed among the ancient Iranians, who were divided into the *Atharvas* (or the priests.—Comp. *Vedic Atharvas*),

* The work of Rai Bahadur R. P. Chanda is remarkable as the first systematic work on Indian Ethnology written by any Indian. His theory is ingenious and has been accepted by eminent European savants like Giuffrida Ruggeri, Haddon, and very recently by Dixon.

Rathaesthas, or the warriors the *Vāstriyas Fshouyants* and the *Huitis*.*

It will be out of place here to enter into a discussion of the arguments advanced by either side, but by way of suggestion the following facts may be pointed out:—

(1) *Firstly*.—That apart from the *Puruṣa Sūkta*, we have references to a three-fold or four-fold division of the community in hymns which admittedly belong to the older stratum. This has also been recognized by the eminent authors of the Vedic Index.†

(2) *Secondly*.—The *Puruṣa Sūkta* is rather a theoretical exposition of a system which had already come into existence rather than an interpolation introduced with a view to create or give sanction to newly created artificial distinctions.‡

(3) *Thirdly*.—The word *Brahmāna* has been more than once used in some of the old hymns to mean a priest. Other such words, like *Arkiṇah*, *Sominah*, and *Gāyatriṇah*, denoting diverse orders of priests, occur, and these clearly point to the development of a powerful priestly body even in the days of the earliest hymns §

(4) *Fourthly*.—The sacrificial art was more highly developed than is supposed to be and with its rise, the well-developed priesthood was advanced enough to undergo further sub-divisions in its ranks, apparently on the basis of division of duties. Some of

* Ludwig—Der Rigveda III p. 243-4.

† (See Vedic Index, on Varṇa—R. V., I. 113—6 and R. V., VIII. 35. 16—18.)

‡ R. V., I. 164. 45; VI. 75.10; VII. 103. 1—8; X. 16.6; X. 71.8; X. 88.19
X. 90.12; X. 97.22; X. 109.4, etc.

§ See my Economic Life and Progress in Ancient India I. pp. 90—95; also Haug's Introduction to the Aitareya Brāhmaṇa.

these priestly classes were very old, many of the names and designations of these priestly sections (e.g., the *Zota* and *Rathwi*) were common with the corresponding members of Iranian priesthood. Even the Rig-Veda (I. 162) mentions the *Hotā*, the *Adhvaryu*, *Pratiprasthātar Avayāj Agnimindha*, *Grāvagrāva*, and *Śamstar*.

(5) *Fifthly*.—As we proceed, we find distinct evidences pointing to the peculiar position and privileges not only of the priests, but of other orders.

(6) *Lastly*.—That with the advancement of the primitive ideas of social organisation, different duties are assigned to the various orders.

An examination of the above points makes it clear that the germs of what we now call caste, existed in the oldest period and gradually the system which we now have, evolved out of these. Whether the origin of the divisions is to be attributed to mere cultural evolution, or to the requirements of a society faced with eternal war, or that there were primary ethnic differences is another point which requires a close examination. Of course, a liberal interpretation of the tradition recorded in our literature goes to confirm the view that at least the two great orders Brāhmaṇas and the Kṣatriyas, had in them certain peculiarities, which point to a difference in the racial element rather than the diversities being the result of a long cultural evolution. These differences become more and more prominent to every intelligent observer as he tries to understand the genius or the temperament of the two great races that have by their co-operation or conflicts contributed so much to the greatness of India in the past. We have, properly speaking, no ethnological data, no remains of skulls, nor any

room for anthropometric speculations. But whatever is obtainable from literary sources has been utilised by an Indian scholar of no mean reputation as an anthropologist, Rai Bahadur R. P. Chanda, who has propounded an ingenious theory about the original ethnic differences subsisting between the early *r̄si* families and those of the ruling tribes. His theory is partly based on *paurāṇika* tradition and is supported by evidences from earlier literature.* Another great authority on early Indian History, Mr. Pargiter, is also inclined to ascribe a difference of origin to the Brāhmaṇas, though he would believe them to be a race of earlier settlers, who closely identified themselves with the pre-Aryan (non-*Aila*) inhabitants. It is difficult to pronounce any clear opinion on either of these theories but what strikes us is almost overwhelming and makes us incline to the acceptance of a theory of racial difference. We have not only the traditional genealogies explaining differences of origin, the peculiar names of the original *r̄si* families as well as those of the ruling dynasties, but we are sure to note the difference in temperament and genius, and the splendid and conspicuous isolation in which the two races maintained themselves in spite of the closest

* For the arguments of Mr. Chanda see his Indo-Aryan Races pp. 18—25. The Epic, the *Harivāṇa* and the *Purāṇas*, contain various traditions about the origin of the caste system. According to the *Viṣṇu Purāṇa* and the *Harivāṇa*, the caste system was reduced to its present state by Gṛtsamada Saunaka. (*Harivāṇa*. Ch-29, also *Viṣṇu Purāṇa* III. 8-1.) In many of these accounts we hear of the Kṣatropeta Brāhmaṇas, e.g. men of the warrior families, who became Brahmins by adoption, or change of occupation. Similar accounts of the elevation of Vaiśyas are also recorded. The work of Saunaka, too, refers to the distinction between the Brahmarṣi and the Rājarsi families. Mr. Chanda has cited Vedic and post-vedic texts, pointing to the difference of colour and hair characterising the members of the original *r̄si* families, and those of the warrior tribes.

possible association in intellectual pursuits and even blood-relationship.

Whatever might have been the original state of affairs, Aryan society came to be marked by the growth of distinct classes within its fold. The Brahmin and the Kṣatriya became more and more conspicuous and prominent, and raised themselves high above the average mass of settlers, the Viś or Viśah.

Furthermore, from the recorded traditions it becomes almost clear that the two races fought between themselves for social supremacy. The rivalry

The Brāhmaṇa and
the Kṣatriya.

between Viśvāmitra and Vaśiṣṭha is recorded even in the Rig-Veda. The Kauśitakī Br. and some other works speak of the destruction of Vaśiṣṭha's children. (Kau. IV.) The seventh Pañcikā of the Aitareya Brāhmaṇa records the quarrel, in the sacrifice of Viśvantara Sauṣadma, who had excluded his hereditary priests the Śyāparṇas. In addition to these, there are numerous legends and accounts in the Epic and the Pūrṇās, which speak of wars between the Brāhmaṇas and the Kṣatriyas. The story of the bloody feud between the Haihayas and the Bhṛgus, between Kārtavīrya Arjuna and Jāmadagnya, all speak of the bitter hostility between these two sections of the Aryan people. Ultimately, however, there was a compromise, the respective privileges of the two castes came to be recognized and the highest social position was allotted to the Brahmin. The Aitareya Brāhmaṇa is one of the earliest authorities to mention the respective duties and privileges of the four castes. The Brahmin and the Kṣatriya, however, continued for long to form marriage-alliances and there remained for a long time a keen competition in the domain of intellectual pursuits. In many places of the Samhitās and the Brāhmaṇas, the relation between the Brahma-

and the Kṣatra is discussed.* Gradually, the position of the Brahmins was safeguarded and strengthened with the elevation of the *Purohita* to the position of an *alter ego* of the ruler.

To the Kṣatriyas was assigned, by virtue of their military prowess, the headship of the people. In this high position, they not only protected the people and ruled the country but also contributed to the intellectual advancement of the community by their philosophical speculations. Many of the fathers of Hindu philosophy belonged to this caste and they often taught Brāhmaṇa disciples.

The mass of common settlers came to be known by the name Vaiśya (from Viś—once applied to the whole body). Though endowed with some of the higher social and intellectual privileges, they came to occupy a lower social position.† They, however,

The Vaishyas.

continued to excel in the arts of life, and the Brāhmaṇas speak of their importance in social and also religious life.‡ According to some authorities

* These are discussed in the *Altareya Brāhmaṇa*, in connection with the quarrel between Visvantara and the Syāparpas. The Brahmin is described as *a-dāyī* (receiver of gifts), *a-paṭī* (soma-drinker), *a-vasiṣṭī* (seeker of food), and *yatha-krama Prayāppīyah* (moving at will)—त्रायकर्त्तव्ये प्रजाकाशनिवास आदायादायावसादी यदाकारं प्रवापः etc. (VII, 22.)

† वैश्यकर्त्तव्ये प्रजाकाशनिवासे च च विलक्षणवर्णादा प्रदाकामज्जं दी एते.

The Vaishya thus came to be regarded as tributary to another (the Kṣatriya), to be lived on by another and to be ruled over by another. (VII, 22. Al Br.)

‡ देवविश्वः कल्पयित्वा दद्यात् स्तु वस्तुमन्तर्मुखादिकः कल्पन इति मनो विषः कल्पने कल्पते यज्ञोऽपि etc., e.g., "They say the gods should be provided with Vaishyas. For if the gods are provided with them, men will subsequently obtain them also. If all the Vaishyas are in readiness, then the sacrifice is performed. With the influence of the sate-th class, certain gods, e.g., those living in *gayas*, like the *Vāsus Rudras*, the *Ādityas*, the *Vīśvadevah* and the *Murals* were regarded as belonging to the Vaishya caste.

they had their own peculiar sacrifices and many have attributed the origin of the *Vājapeya* to them.

The lowest position in society came to be occupied by the Śūdras, who were not unlike the serfs or the lowest class of the early Teutonic Society. European scholars have identified them with the descendants of the subdued non-Aryans, who had been reduced to the position of slaves by their conquerors. This

The Śūdras.

view is rather far-fetched and hardly receives confirmation from indigenous evidences. The

Śūdra is clearly distinguished from the Dāsa or the Dasyu, which designate slaves or outlaws belonging to the aboriginal races. Moreover, the Śūdra, as we see from the Puruṣa Sūkta, was equally a member of Aryan Society. His social position was low, and the term Śūdra was often used as a term of reproach. Being a member of the degraded section of the Aryans, he was condemned to work and toil for the benefit of the upper classes. In the Aitareya passage (VII. 29), he is described as the servant of another and his life could be taken away by the Rājanyas at will.^o

Gradually, Aryan society was further modified by the growth of many more classes growing with the rise of the arts and crafts. The requirements of agriculture or of war, brought a tendency to division of labour and the craftsmen emerged out as separate bodies from the mass of the agriculturist population. Some of these, the *stī* or *upasti*, stood in close relation to the king. As the number of occupations multiplied, these added to the complexities of life and of interest, and the Vaiśya and Śūdra craftsmen or labourers organised themselves in guilds.[†]

^o यदृशस्ते प्रजायामनिष्टेऽन्वत् देवः कानोलाप्ति यदाकाम वाचः etc.

[†] For a discussion of all these, see my "Economic Life and Progress in Ancient India," Vol. I, book II.

VIII

Socio-political divisions of the Aryans

HAVING discussed the constitution of Aryan society and the gradual evolution of classes we pass on to enquire into the organisation of the Aryan population or the basis of their political divisions.

In the earliest period of which we know but little, the Aryans seem to have been nomadic invading bands who constantly moved from one place to another. Gradually, they gave up their nomadic habits and settled down in the land they wrested from their enemies. In course of time, these regions became dotted with their settlements, which were known as the *Viś* (or *Viśah*)—the word originating from the very ancient root *Viś*—to enter or settle. The inhabitants of the settlements were known as *Viśah*.

Many of these *Viśah* came to be designated by the name of the locality or of the tribe to which they belonged. Thus, we hear of the Trīpaskanda *Viś* (R.V., I. 172. 3 त्रिपक्षकदस्य तु विशः परि हड्क मुदानवः^० etc.), which though explained in a different way by Sāyana is clearly a *Viś* called after the locality. In another place, we are told of the Asikni *Viśah* (R.V. VII. 5. 3. असिक्षिया-विश आयत्तमिक्तोरसमना जहौतीर्भीजनानि)[†] In other places we hear of

^० Sāyana interprets Trīpaskanda in quite a different way, e.g., ते सहस्रः मुदानवः, ..., त्रिपक्षकदस्य त्रिपक्षकलसमावय यजमानाभ्य वा सह विशः विशः पुत्रस्त्रियादिकपा; प्रजा; etc.

[†] Sāyana explains असिक्षिया as meaning असिक्षितवशी राजस्व;

Vishah called after the tribe to which they belonged, and as an example we may mention the *Viś* of the *Tṛtsus* (अभवत्य पुरपता वसिष्ठ आदित्यतमन्^a विशो अग्रवन्त् R.V., VII. 33. 6.) In many other places, the word is used rather in a general sense, and designates people in general. Thus, R.V., X. 11. 4 speaks of the *Arya Viś* (यदी विशो हृष्णते दत्तमार्यो अग्निं होतारमध्य धौरजायत). Similarly, R.V., IV. 28. 4. speaks of the *Dasyu Viś*. In another place, we hear of the *Dāsa Viś* which is contrasted with the *Arya Viś* (R.V., VI. 25. 2.—आभिविश्वा अभिशुजो विष्वूचोरायायं विशोऽवं तारोदासीः)†

We have no further details of the *Viś* or its organisation. Our task is made difficult by various circumstances, the modification which the social fabric was rapidly undergoing being one of these. The rise of the Caste System was of immense influence, as we shall see very soon.

Each of these *Vishah* or settlements seems to have had a chief of its own, and this man dominated over the inhabitants of the settlement, either by virtue of his being the patriarchal head of the clan which had settled therein, or by virtue of his being vested with authority, by the people who recognized him as leader. Probably, different types of settlements existed and in some cases these belonged to men of the same blood. In these, the patriarch or the agnatic elder was also the head of the settlement, the two offices vesting in the same person. Such settlements are

Vispati or the head to be pre-supposed from the evidence of the
of the settlement. Taittirīya Samhitā, which in more than one
places describes *Vishah* as *Sujatas*. (Taitt. II. 1. 3. 2. 3. etc., or

^a Sayana does not explain दत्तमन् at all.

—अभिज्ञुतिभिरेव..... सर्वतो विष्वमानः दासीः कर्मणामुपस्थितिरोः विशः सप्ताः विशः दासः आर्याः
ऽप्तादिकर्मेन्द्रियजलानाव अवहारीः विष्वाय—85; and.

of that passage of the Atharva Veda which mentions Visah along with the bāndhavah (XV. 8. 2-3, A.-V.).

स विषः सवभूनवमचायमभ्युदतिष्ठत् । २

विशां चरै स सवभूनां चात्रस्य चाचायस्य च पियं धाम भवति य एवं वेद । ३

On the other hand, the separate existence of a Viśpati apart from the head of the family, is inferred from that Rig-Vedic passage in which a lover seeking his sweetheart at night, lulls to sleep, not only the father, the mother, the kinsmen, and other relations, and the dogs, but also the Viśpati (VII. 55, 5)

e.g. सस्तु माता सस्तु पिता सस्तु स्त्रा सस्तु विश्पतिः ।

सस्तु सर्वे चातयः सत्यमभितो जनः ॥ * ॥

The eminent German scholar Zimmer, who was one of the earliest to study the social and political organisation of the Vīś—a military organisation. Vedic peoples, regarded the Vīś as a unit of military organisation and identified it with the *Gau* (*Pagus*) or Canton, into which the Teutonic peoples were divided, according to Tacitus. According to him, the division of the Vedic peoples was not merely geographical but a military one. The organised Viśah or the people, fought against their enemies under the leadership of the Viś-pati, who acted as the commander of that section of the tribal host.

Zimmer quotes a large number of passages to prove the above point. Thus, according to him R.V., II., 26. 3. clearly refers to this character of the Vīś which is contrasted with *Jana*, *Janma* and *Putra*,† while the next passage cited clearly speaks

* हे सारमेय माता लहीया...सस्तु विश्पतिऽमाता यदा विशो जनानां पातकी गरही...सप्तु ॥

१८ पुस्तक स विकास अन्ननाथ गुरुद्वीप भरते धना दृष्टि; (II. 26. 3) R. V.

of the fighting Viśah (R.V., IV. 24. 4).^o Again, R.V., X. 84. 4 describes the host as divided in Viśah.[†] To these cited by Zimmer, we may add the evidence of another passage, which though it does not confirm the fighting nature of the Viś, describes the army of the Maruts as having been divided into *Vrata*, *Gana* and *Sardha*.[‡]

Many scholars have attempted to refute these views of

Military character of
Viś discussed. Zimmer. Macdonnell and Keith have gone deep into the question and having discussed the interpretation of the passages cited, they have come to the conclusion that "the rendering *Gau*, has therefore little foundation." (II. 307). Now, in regard to the real character of the Viśah, it is difficult to pronounce any clear opinion since we must bear in mind that the hymns cited, mark an age of social and political transition. But, while differences must exist in regard to the acceptance of Zimmer's theory of the three-fold division of the people into *Jana*, *Viś* and *Grāma*, it will be difficult to deny that in those days, the *Viś* was a unit of military organisation. The passage R.V., V. 43. 1. about the Maruts throws more light on the point. Of the three divisions, the word *Vrata* retained its old meaning of a fighting body for a long time (as would be clear from the evidence of sankrit lexicons and of commentaries to Pāṇini), and it is not improbable that owing to the constant enmity of the aborigines, each settlement had to be on its guard or to send a quota of soldiers to the tribal host.

^o एव यदिवीत्युपर्वत्य युध्य। आदित्य न इत्ययने चक्रोऽसि (R.V., IV. 24. 4).

[†] एकी वहानमसि मन्त्रोलिलौ विश्विर्युष्टि सि गिरापि (R.V., X. 84. 4).

[‡] रथं रथं व एषा द्वासेवात् गच्छ गच्छ सुशालिभिः (R.V., V. 53. 11).

Perhaps a lower sub-division of the *Vig* was the *Grāma* or The *Grāma* or Village. the village. It was once a wandering body and we have even a tradition in the *Satapatha Brāhmaṇa*, which speaks of Śaryāta Mānava wandering with his village.* A Rig-Vedic passage, too, goes to confirm the above view according to Zimmer.† But, gradually, the *Grāma* became a settled body, and comprised a number of families, who mainly engaged in agriculture. Furthermore, as agriculture became the chief occupation of the Vedic peoples, the *Grāma* became the basis of social life. The number of villages increased, the *Araṇya* (which is contrasted with the *Grāma*, and was a sort of no man's land) was cleared, pastures and fields were extended and the activity of the people was directed to peaceful and settled ways of life. Roads were constructed to connect distant villages.

Lack of information stands in our way, when we try to ascertain the original basis of village life or its gradual development. We have no means of deciding whether originally the village was established on the basis of kinship or that its leader was the head of the agnatic group.

Among European scholars, Zimmer is inclined to take the *Grāma* as a clan standing mid-way between the tribe and the family. We have no explicit statement to prove such blood-relationship among villagers but it is not improbable that originally newly-settled villages were mostly peopled by men of the same family or that some villages arose out of the elaboration of the family of the original settler as well as his dependants

* See *Satapatha Brāhmaṇa*—IV, 1, 6, 2-7.

† This passage describes the *Bhratas* as consisting of *Grāmas* cooking cows.

ब्रह्मा भृता: सनरेपुर्विष्वाम रघुन इदम्; R. V., III, 33, 11.

Sayana explains ग्राम् as ग्रा च वकानि ग्रामविष्वाम् and शासी भगवान् महः etc.

and servants. This type we can easily distinguish even in the later *Sāmhitās*. The Taittiriya *Sāmhitā* in many places gives us details about ceremonies which qualified men to become *Gṛāmīns* or heads of villages, and in some places we are told of some such village-owners who rose to that position with the consent of *Sājātas* or *Samānas*.^a The mention of these words clearly points to the existence of village-types in which kinship prevailed as the bond of unity. Probably, out of these the later caste-villages arose.

Agriculture early became the chief occupation of the people,

Agriculture the chief occupation. as would appear from the general evidence of the Rig-Vedic hymns, as well as that of several words and passages. The innumerable prayers for rain, the adoration of Suna and Sīra (IV. 57), the use of the words *Kṛṣti* and *Carsapi* to denote people in general, or the use of the words *Pāśa Kṛṣṭayāḥ* or *Carsapayāḥ* to denote the five great tribes clearly shows that agriculture had long become their chief occupation. Perhaps this knowledge of agriculture goes back to the Indo-Iranian period, as is proved by the similarity between *Yavam Kṛṣ* and *Yao Karesh*.[†] In those days, every householder was an agriculturist and the importance of that art in the eyes of the hymn-composers would appear from the advice given to the gambler—viz., not to gamble but to resort to agriculture “which was sure to grant wife, wealth and cattle.” (R.V. X. 34.13.)‡

^a For a consideration of these see my “Economic Life and Progress in Ancient India,” Vol. I, pp. 104–5.

[†] For an enquiry as to the origin of agriculture, see my “Economic Life and Progress in Ancient India,” Vol. I, pp. 113–14.

[‡] पर्वतो देवः अविनिश्चयम् दिति रमते वहु मन्मानः।
सप्त गावः किंवद् नन्त भावा तत्त्वे विचर्ते संवितापरमः॥ R.V., X. 34. 13.

Agriculture being thus the chief occupation of the mass
of the people, rights in land became definite.
Land tenure.

By the time of the Rig-Vedic hymns, there was hardly any trace of communal ownership found among primitive communities, except in the pasture or the *Aranya*. This has been recognized by almost all authorities including Baden Powell or the authors of the Vedic Index. The latter, however, go so far as to deny the existence of communal ownership even in the pasture.* At the same time we do not find any indication of periodic allotments existing among the Teutons or among the village communities of modern Russia, Croatia or Slavonia.

At the head of the village, there was the *Grāmanṭ* or the *Grāmanṭ* or the head of the village head-man, whose functions or duties are, however, unknown. Zimmer would invest him with military functions owing to his close connection with the *Senāni* or the military commander (see *Altindisches Leben*, p. 171). In many places we find him taking a prominent part in the coronation ritual described in the *Brāhmaṇas*. He is one of the *Ratnins*, and is explained as the elected head of villages by our Indian commentators (e.g., यामानाम् नेता).

The rights of the villagers or their duties to the head of the tribe are not clearly known. The evidence of the Atharva Veda clearly shows that the king was entitled only to a share of the village† (produce?). Whatever other rights the latter had are not clearly known and very little is known about the king being regarded as the owner of villages or of the soil. The main

* For a summary of these arguments as well as my objections in the case of the pasture, see my "Economic Life and Progress in Ancient India," Vol. I. pp. 100—106.

† A. V. IV. 22.2—एमं भज यामि अवैषु गीषु निष्ट भज यो अमिकी अस्ति।

trend of evidence, which hardly bears on the point directly, shows that the king was hardly regarded as the owner of the soil. The passages relating to the gift of grāmas by kings, or the elevation to the position of *Grāmin*, which raise a doubt to this, have been very intelligently explained by the authors of the Vedic Index who hold that "these most probably refer to the grant of regalia than to the grant of land as Teutonic parallels show." (Vedic Index I. 246.)

Leaving the question of blood-relationship an open one,
 Constitution of the we must regard the village as comprising
 village. a number of families or *Kulas*. These were under the control of the *Kulapas* or family-heads, either exercising the autocratic rights of a "*pater familias*" or acting as the manager of a coparcenary family group. Zimmer regards them as having been vested with the almost autocratic powers residing in a Roman "*pater familias*." Against this view there is clear evidence that, in India, the family-head, whether the father of children or the eldest of the agnatic group, had little of the powers of a Roman father and that in localities where the joint-family existed, the members were invested with rights of equal ownership or of enjoyment.* There is another word to denote a village, e.g., *Vṛjana*, in which sense it is taken by Roth and other Vedic scholars. *Sāyana*, in some places, makes it mean *Saṅgrāma* or battle. (See com. I. 51. 15.)

* These points have been discussed already in my "Economic Life and Progress in Ancient India," Vol. I. pp. 104-5, in the sub-section entitled "Nature of Public Ownership." Here the reader will find arguments both for and against Zimmer's view. What is peculiar to India is the vested right which is thought to reside in the son as soon as he is born. This is amply illustrated by the story of Nābhāneśīha.

IX

Highest political organisation.
—The Jana or the tribe.

If the *Grāma* was the smallest, the *Jana* was the highest political and social union among the Vedic communities. The word comes from a very ancient root which is found in many other Indo-European languages. It meant both an individual and a body of men claiming birth from a common ancestor. That it signified such a body is apparent from its use in the Rig Veda where we find almost all the important tribes of the Aryan Conquerors designated as “*Janāśah*.” Thus, in III. 53. 12. of the Rig Veda, in which Viśvāmitra prays for the Bharatas, the latter are described as forming a *Janah** (*Bhāratam Janam*). In another hymn by Kāṇva, in praise of gifts (R V., VIII. 6.46—48), the Yādavas are described both as *Yādava Jana* or are designated in the plural (*yādvānām*), a practice supported by the rules of grammar †. The word *Jana* is also applied to designate the five great divisions of the Aryan Conquerors (*Pāñca-janāḥ* or *Janāśah*.)

This *Jana* was intimately connected with the “*Rājan*” or the King. This would appear from the evidence of a number of passages. One of these, in course of a prayer, expressly asks for providing

Character of Jana.
Its connection with the
Rājan.

* विश्वामित्रस रचति ब्रह्मोद्देशं भारते जनम्। R.V., III. 53.12.

† शतमङ्गं तिरिन्दिरे महसं पशोवांददै। राजासि यातानाम्।

वीणि शतावर्वती महसा दश गोनाम्। ददुवप्रज्ञाय साचे।

उदानटकुही दिवसु द्वाचत्पूर्वजो ददत्। श्रवसा याऽ जनम्। VIII. 6.46—43.

the tribe with a king (R.V., V, 58. 4).* In another, we find the king described as "Gopā Janasya,"† while in R.V., IX. 35. 5, Soma is described as "Gopati Janasya."‡ Lastly, we have one passage in the tenth Maṇḍala, which throws more light on this point and establishes the closest possible relation between the king (Rājan) and the Jana. The hymn in question is R.V. X. 159 and in that we find a queen, Sacī Paulomī, uttering a magical formula for counteracting the influence of co-wives over her husband, to prevent any harm arising out of their influence, to retain the highest place in her husband's eyes, to enable her son to be the master some time afterwards, and to bestow honour on her daughter. The conjuration ends with the following utterance :— "I have displaced rival wives, risen superior to them and thereby I rule over this man and the Jana."§ In another, a victorious king speaks of his success over enemies and his lordship over the *Jana*.||

* युधं राजानसियं जनाय विभवतटं अनयथा यज्ञाः । R.V., V. 58.4.

† कुविद्वा गोपीं करसे जनस्य कुविद्राज्ञानं सच्चवद्वौपिन् । R.V., VI. 43.5.

‡ सोमं जनस्य गोपतिम् R.V., IX. 35.5.

§ नम पुत्राः श्रवेद्वैर्योऽर्थो मे दुहिता विराटः ॥

स्त्राहमन्ति सज्जया पत्नी मे श्रीक उत्तमः ॥

श्रेनेन्द्रो हविषा कल्प भव द्युख्यानमः ।

दुर्दं तदक्षिं देवा असपत्रा किला भूषम् ॥

असपत्रा सपत्नी जग्न्त्वभिन्नवरी ।

आङ्गामन्त्यासीं वर्जीं राधीं अस्त्रेयसामिव ॥

समजैयमिमा अर्द्धं सपत्नीरभिन्नवरी ।

यथाहमस्य विराजनि जनस्य च ॥ R.V., X. 159.

|| असपत्रः सपत्नीरभिन्नवरी विषासहिः ।

यथाहमेवां भूतानां विराजनि जनस्य च ॥ R.V., X. 174.5.

The *Jana*, therefore, we may take to be the highest political union among the Aryan Conquerors, and we regard it to have been synonymous with the "tribe."

Zimmer took *Jana* to be identical with the tribe, and held that the *Jana*, as such, was the conglomeration of a number of *Viś* which he compared with the *Pagus* or *Gau* existing among the Teutons, as described by Tacitus. "Their number was in every case different, according to the size of a particular tribe, just as among the ancient Germans, the number of *Gaus* (or *Pagi*) which were combined together in a *Thinda* (*civitas*) was different." Furthermore, according to him "in a further sub-division came the village-ship the *Grāma* or *Vṛjana*" which was entirely the same as the ancient German *Vicus*. This village community again depended on the combination of individual families.

Thus far, we have proceeded in forming an estimate of the social polity of the Aryan peoples. In the present state of our knowledge, we cannot attempt to clear up further details, in spite of the fact that various points still remain which require further explanation. Thus, as we have said already, we know not how far the principle of blood-relationship acted as the bond of union among the tribe. Furthermore, we have to deal with the interpretation of the *Gotra*, which was a sub-division as old as the *Viś*, if not older. This *Gotra* division survived, entirely displaced the *Viś* by the time of the Brāhmaṇas, and later on became the basic principle in the formation of exogamous groups.

Various interpretations of this *Gotra* have been suggested.

The Gotra. Earlier philologists like Roth and Geldner thought it to mean either a cow-stable or the herd. These, however, hardly explain the real meaning or the

significance of the *Gotra*. The importance of the *Gotra*⁶⁰ in India, specially among the Brahmins, is known to every student of Indian history or literature. According to Brahmanic theory, *Gotras* are derived from the common ancestor, who is very often a *Rsi*, and is either a Brahmin by origin or by adoption. Later Brahmanical interpretation ascribes *Gotra* to Brahmins only, and explains the *Gotra* of other castes as being derived from their priests or preceptors. Whether it was originally a Brahmanic institution or not is difficult to decide, for we have reasons for believing that similar divisions based on agnatic kinship existed among the Greeks and the Romans.

Next, in regard to the *Janas* or tribes, we are not in a position to decide whether these were entirely homogeneous bodies, entirely based on descent from common ancestors enjoying perfect equality of rank and following a common tribal religion, or that the tribe had become a medley of different ranks and grades, prominent among whom were the ruler and his kinsmen, the priest and his relatives and the servile population. Our enquiries make us rather incline to the latter view, for we can easily see that the tribe was not, strictly speaking, confined to the descendants of a common ancestor, but constant additions and changes were being made by the principle of adoption or affiliation which was in vogue in India (as also in Rome and elsewhere). The royal families were adopting children from the priestly sections, while the priests, too, were adopting men of the ruling races. Such instances are found to have

⁶⁰ For the importance of the *Gotras* see Chāndogya IV, iv, I.; also Āśvalāyana Śrauta Sūtra and the Uṇhyā Sūtras. In regard to the Kṣatriyas, Āśvalāyana expressly says that the princes derived their *Pravara* from their priests (e.g., पुरोहित-प्रवरो राजा॒म्).

been very common. We have Viśvāmitra adopting Śunahṣepha, son of the Brahmin Ajigarta, while, according to Sāyaṇa, Saunaka, an Āṅgirasa, became Gr̥tsamada by adoption. The Purāṇas and the Epic contain traditions about such adoptions in connection with the origin of the castes. (See Vedic Index I. p. 236.)

X

The Aryan Tribes and their Early History

It is difficult to write a systematic history of the Aryan tribes. Nothing definite is known about their original location or early activities. The Rig-Vedic hymns give us only occasional particulars relating to some of them or their princes, either in connection with prayers to deities or of praises of munificent

History from occasional details. princes by the recipients of gifts. In connection with these, we sometimes get details about the exploits of princes, the tribes connected with them or their enemies. Occasionally, the connection of princes to their tribes is explained clearly, while in many cases, princes are distinguished by patronymics, which give us a clue to their identification.

The following is a list of the tribes mentioned in the Vedic hymns, together with their location according to the Vedic Index and other authorities :—

In the extreme west and beyond the Indus were :—The Kambojas, Gandhāris, Alinas, Pakthas, Bhalānas and Viṣāṇins.

Immediately to the east of the Indus were :—The Arjikiyas, Śivas, Kekayas, Vṛcivants and the Yadus (between Sindhu and Vitastā).

To the east of the Vitastā in the extreme hill region there were :—
The Mahāvṛṣas, Uttara-Kurus and Uttara-Madras.

Between the Asikni and the Paruṣṇī there were :—The Bālhikas, and below them, the Druhyus, Turvaśas and the Anus.

To the east of the Śatudrī were :—The Bharata-Tṛtsus, the Pūrus, and the Pārāvatas, while south of the Dṛṣadvatī were the Śrñjayas.

Further to the east and east of the Yamunā were :—The Uśinaras, Vaśas, the Salvas, the Krivis—who in the days of the early Rig-Vedic hymns lay in the Indus region, but became later on the nucleus of the Pañcālas—and the Cedis.

South of the Dṛṣadvatī and the Yamunā were :—The Matsyas.

The following is a list of the Vedic tribes, together with a summary of details obtainable about them :—

The Anus (Ānaras).—At the time of the Rig-Veda they were living on the Paruṣṇī. In the Rig-Veda (I. 108.8), they are mentioned with the Yadus, Pūrus, Turvaśas and the Druhyus.

The Ajas.—The location of this tribe is extremely doubtful. They were defeated by Sudās along with the Sigrus and Yakṣus (R. V., VII. 18.19).

The Alinas.—They are mentioned in R. V., VII. 18.7. According to Roth, they were a sub-division of the Tṛtsus. They are mentioned along with the Pakthas, Bhalānas, Śivas and the Viṣṭānins.

The Ambaṣṭhyas.—From the surname of a king in the Aitareya Brāhmaṇa, who seems to have been a great conqueror, we can presuppose the Ambaṣṭha tribe. (The Epic evidence proves them to have been a republican tribe, akin to similar tribes living in the Indus region).

The Uśinaras.—We know no details about them from the Rik hymns, but in the Rig-Veda, Uśinarāṇī (an Uśinara

queen) is mentioned and there is a verse ascribed to one Śibi Uśinara (X. 179). Later on, in the Ait. Br., they are associated with the Kuru-Pāñcālas. In the Kausitakī Up, they are associated with the Kuru-Pāñchālas and the Vāgas. The Gopatha Br. regards them as Northerners.

The Kambojas.—They are mentioned later but not in the Rig-Veda. The Vaṃśa Brāhmaṇa refers to their different language.

The Krivis.—They are mentioned in the Rig-Veda as settled on the Sindhu and the Asiknī (VIII. 20.24 and 22.12). A Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa tradition regards them as the originals of the Pāñchālas, and we hear of a prince Kraivya Pāñcāla. The name is lost in the Epic, probably owing to their being merged with the Pāñcālas and Turvaśas.

The Gandhāris.—Are mentioned in the Rig-Veda, in a passage in which a woman praises the wool (R. V., I. 126.7) of that region. They are next mentioned in the Fever Hymn in A. V. (V. 22.14). Later on, they are spoken of in the Śrauta Sūtras. According to Zimmer, they were settled on the Kubhā.

The Cedis.—They are not mentioned prominently in the Rig-Veda but their king, Kaśu Caidya, is praised in a Dānastuti (R. V., VIII. 5.37.39). Later on, they are found to live very close to the Matsyas.

The Turvaśas.—They are prominently mentioned in the Rig-Veda and are closely associated with the Yadus, Anus, Pūrus, Druhyus. They are described as taking part against Sudās (R. V., VII. 18.6). In that battle,

the Anu and Druhyu kings are described as having been drowned but Yadu and Turvaśa escaped. In one passage of the Rig-Veda, the Turvaśa king appears as a praiser of Indra. Again, according to Griffith's interpretation of a passage, the Turvaśa and Yadu kings jointly defeated two princes, Arṇa and Arya Citraratha, on the Sarayu. Two passages seem to show a joint Yadu and Turvaśa attack on Divodāsa, father of Sudās. Later on, they became merged in the Pañcālas (Sat. Br. VIII. 5.4-16), and their contingent is described as accompanying the Pañcāla horse. They lived in the neighbourhood of the Paruṣṇī, but in course of time advanced from the west to the east.

The Trtsus.—They seem to have been helpers of king Sudās against the ten allied kings* in the great battle on the Paruṣṇī and on the Yamunā. Their real identity has as yet not been determined. Ludwig identified the Trtsus with the Bharatas, while Oldenberg went so far as to hold that they were the priests of the Bharatas, and thereby tried to prove that they were identical with the Vaśiṣṭhas. In the absence of details it is difficult to identify them properly. Probably, they were intimately connected with the Bharatas, and coalescing with the Pūrus and other tribes, they formed the Kuru people. Some years ago, an Indian scholar†

* In that attack, the following tribes and rulers took part against king Sudās:—The Śimyus, Turvaśas, Druhyus, Kavaśas, Pūrus, Anus, Vaikarpas, Yadus, Matsyas, Pakthas, Bhalānas, Alinas, Viṣapins, Śivas, Ajas, and the Yakṣus, together with the Princes Śambara and Bheda.

† See U. C. Batavyāla's "Veda-provesikā."

tried to prove that the name Tr̄tsu occurs in a modified form in the Epic list of the Puru kings as Tampsu. This, if accepted, would explain their connection with the Bharatas.

The Druhyus.—They are mentioned in the Rig-Veda several times, once along with the Yadus, Turvaśas, Anus and Pūrus. The Druhyu king fought against Sudās and was drowned, in the “ten kings’ battle.” Pūru and Druhyu occur in one passage (R.V., VI. 46.8). They were a north-western people and, according to an Epic tradition, were connected with Gāndhāra.

The Pakthas.—They are mentioned (Rig-Veda VII. 18.7), in the list of the tribes who fought against the Tr̄tsus and the Bharatas. In three other passages a Paktha is mentioned and one of them is connected with Pūru Trasadasyu. In another passage connected with Turvāyana, he is described as a Paktha.

The Parśus.—In the Rig-Veda, Parśu Mānavi is mentioned (X. 86.3). Again, in one Dāuastuti hymn, the epithet Parśu occurs, and it is supposed to be identical with Tirindira. No more details are known though we have many conjectures.

The Pārthavas.—They are mentioned in R. V., VI. 27.8. Abhyāvartin Cayamāna, a Pārthava, is described as a great donor, and was a conqueror who subdued the the Varasikhas.

The Pāravatas—Were a people mentioned in two passages of the Rig-Veda (VIII. 34.18) They were a people on the Yamunā. In the Pañca-vimśa Br. (IX. 4.11) they are described as a people living on that river.

The Pūrus.—They are mentioned in the Rig-Veda and in one place (e.g., R. V., I. 108.8), their name occurs in connection with the other four tribes. In R.V., VII. 18.13, they appear as the enemies of the Tṛtsus. They were defeated by the Bharatas but were victorious over the aborigines. Among their great rulers, the Rig-Veda mentions the kings Pūrukutsa and Trasadasyu. Kuruśravāṇa, a Kuru king, is known as Trasadasyava, and this shows that the Kurus and Pūrus were closely related by inter-marriage. Their locality appears to have been east of the Sarasvatī. The Paurāṇika and Epic lists of Ayodhyā show the names Purukutsa and Trasadasyu.

The Prithus.—According to Ludwig, they were a tribe in alliance with the Parśus and were opposed to the Tṛtsu-Bharatas (R.V., VII. 83.1).

The Vāhlikas.—They were a Punjab tribe living in the north and closely connected with the Mujavantas and Mahāvṛṣas. Their first mention is in the Atharva Veda Fever Hymn.

The Bharatas.—They seem to have had the closest possible relation with the Tṛtsus. But the exact connection of the Bharatas and the Tṛtsus is very disputed. Oldenberg identifies the Tṛtsus with the Vasishthas, while we have Hille-Brandt's theory of the union of the two. Later on, the fame of the Bharatas increased with the conquests, and the greatness of kings like Bharata Dauḥṣanti or Satāṅka Sātrājita, who repeatedly performed the horse-sacrifice. In the Rig-Veda, they are prominent in connection with Sudās and the Tṛtsus. In the Brāhmaṇa age, they became prominent between the

Gaṅgā and the Yamunā, and became the principal element in the Kuru people.

The Bhalānas.—Were one of the tribes mentioned in the Rig-Veda (VII. 18). They fought against Sudās. Their original home, according to some scholars, was in Eastern Kabulistan (*compare* Bolan Pass).

The Matsyas.—They are mentioned in the Rig-Veda (VII. 18) and appear to have been the enemies of Sudās. Later on, in the Śatap. Br., we find a Matsya king Dvaivavāta (Sat. Br. XIII. 5.4-9) performing an Aśvamedha sacrifice. They are not mentioned prominently in the Rig-Veda but we find them famous later on.

The Madras.—In the Br̥hadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad and in the Ait-Br., the two Madras are mentioned.

The Mujavantas.—They are not mentioned in the Rig-Veda, but the Atharva Veda describes them in connection with the Fever Hymn.

The Yaksus.—They were a Rig-Vedic tribe inimical to the Tr̥tsus (R. V., VII. 18). Some identify them with the Yadus.

The Yadus.—They were one of the five tribes often mentioned together. They are repeatedly mentioned in the Rig-Veda as allies with the Turvaśas against Sudās. According to R. V., VII. 18, the Yadu and Turvaśa kings, though defeated, escaped with their lives. According to one interpretation, though defeated by Sudās, the Yadus were victorious over Arṇa and Ārya Citraratha, two Aryan chiefs.

The Ruśamas.—They are twice mentioned in the Rig-Veda. A king of the Ruśamas—Rnañcaya is mentioned as a

great giver. Kaurama, their king, is mentioned in the Atharva Veda.

The Vasas.—They are not mentioned in the Rig-Vedic hymns, but mentioned only in the Ait. Br. in the central region along with the Kuru-Pañcasas and Uśinaras. They were also connected with the Matsyas.

The Varasikhas.—They are probably mentioned in the Rig-Veda and in that book we find the account (VI. 27.4 and 5) of a tribe-leader or his tribe of this name, defeated by Abhyāvartin Cayamāna.

The Visāṇins.—They were a tribe inimical to Sudās (R. V., VII. 18). No more details are known.

The Vṛetravatas.—They were an Aryan tribe mentioned in the Rig-Veda, where we find them (R. V., VI. 27.5) conquered by Daivavāta Śrījaya along with the Turvaśas. According to an account in the Pañca-vimśa Br. they struggled for sovereignty with the Jahnus.

The Vaikarnas.—They were a Rig-Vedic people. In the Rig-Veda (VII. 18), the clans of the Vaikarnas were defeated by Sudās in the "ten kings' battle." The Mahābhārata mentions them.

The Sigrus.—They are mentioned in the Rig-Veda and were one of the enemy tribes against the Tṛtsus and Sudās (R. V., VII. 18).

The Simyus.—They were a tribe who, according to Rig-Vedic evidence, were enemies fighting against Sudās (R. V., VII. 18).

The Sivas.—They were, according to the Rig-Veda (R. V., VII. 18), enemies who fought against Sudās along with the Alinas, Pakthas and the Bhalānas.

The Śiṣṭas.—They were a clan mentioned in the Rig-Veda in the Vālakhilya (VII. 53).

The Srñjayas.—They were a tribe mentioned in the Rig-Veda.

Two hymns (R.V., VI. 27.7 and IV, 15.4) mention a Srñjaya king Daivavāta, as winning victories over the Turvaśas and over Sāhadevya Somaka. We have a Dānastuti praising a Srñjaya king Prastoka. There is some evidence to prove that this tribe was once closely associated with the Tr̄tsus and were enemies of the Turvaśas.

The Somakas.—They are found mentioned in the Rig-Veda, and their existence is to be presupposed from the patronymic Somaka of Sāhadevya defeated by Daivavāta.

As we shall see later on, only a few of this host of tribes became more prominent or powerful. The rest of them, like the Ajas, Alinas, Parśus, Pārthavas, Yakṣus Varasikhas, Viñins, Pakthas, Bhalānas, Śigrus, Śimyus, Śiṣṭas or the Vaikarnas, remained unimportant for ever. These never gained any political importance. Of doubtfully Aryan peoples, we find the Kikatas mentioned in the Rig-Veda. As to the names of more such tribes, whether non-Aryans or the extreme border-scions of the Aryans, we hear more in the Brāhmaṇas and the later Samhitās. The Atharva Veda mentions the Āṅgas and Magadha, while Vaṅga is mentioned still later.

The later Samhitās and the Brāhmaṇas mention many tribes of aboriginal peoples. The more important of these were the Andhras, Puṇḍras, Mutivas, Pulindas, and the Niṣādas.

In course of time, Aryan tribes multiplied either by new immigration or through settlements in new localities. Such

names are numerous, *e.g.*, Sparsus, Śūrasenas Śviknas, Śālvās, Śibi, the Satvant, the Vidarbhas, the Vaśas, the Jahṇus, the Videhas. Some of these tribes or tribal groups came to be designated by the locality of their settlement, *e.g.*, Prācyas, Nīcyas, Udīcyas or Apācyas.

Later on, many of the Aryan tribes, as we shall see, underwent changes in organisation and name. In the Later tribes. Brāhmaṇas, we find a number of such modified or reconstituted tribes, which arose with the re-grouping of clans. Of these, we have the Kurus, Kāsis, Pāñchālas, Kośalas and Videhas, who became prominent later on. Many of the older tribes maintained their name and position while others like the Anus, Druhyus or Turvaśas, lost their name and identity even. They seem to have been merged into some of the new tribes rising into political importance.

Prominence of five tribes. Five among these tribes seem to have claimed the special attention of the Rig-Vedic poets, *e.g.*, the Anus, the Pūrus, the Druhyus, the Yadus and the Turvaśas. They are not only mentioned more often but are frequently associated with each other. Many Vedic scholars incline to the view that the five are synonymous with the "five peoples" or, as they are called, *Pañca Janāḥ* or *Pañca Krṣṭāyah*. They reject the view of Sāyaṇa who identifies the five peoples with the four castes (*Varnas*) together with the Niṣādas, the explanation of the Aitāreya Brāhmaṇa (III. 31 and IV. 27) or of the Nirukta of Yāṣṭi where the five are identified either with the Gods, Men, Gandharvas, Apsaras and the Fathers, or the Gandharvas, Fathers, Gods, Asuras and Rākṣasas. Prominent among those who identified the "five peoples" with these five tribes, were Zimmer and Haug. Some scholars, like Hopkins, still combat

Zimmer's view. Anyhow, it is curious to find the five tribes associated closely, and this, coupled with the Epic Tradition that the five were descended from king Yayāti, throws an important suggestion as to their forming one particular branch of the Aryan people.

This close connection is apparent from a large number of Their close association. Rig-Vedic passages. Thus, in one place all the five are mentioned together.* In a second passage we find four tribes, e.g., Anus, Turvaśas, Yadus and Druhyus, mentioned together.† Another passage mentions the Anus with the Druhyus.‡ Elsewhere, the close connection between the Yadus and the Turvaśas is apparent from compounds or expressions like Turvaśa-Yadu, Yadu-Turvaśa or Turvaśā-Yadū and Yadus-Turvasca (R.V., V. 31.8., I. 108.8. See Vedic Index note on Turvaśa.)§

By the time when the hymns were composed, the five had penetrated far into the Punjab and occupied Location. various regions of that province. As mentioned already, the Druhyus, Turvaśas and Anus once occupied among themselves the doab between the Asikṇī and the Paruṣṇī. Then, the Yadus had the left lower part of the delta between the Sindhu and Vitastā, while the Pūrus had evidently crossed the Śutudrī.

In addition to these five, there were many Punjab. more in the narrow valleys and doabs of the Punjab, and constant fights were going on. Many of these

* R.V., I. 108.8. यदिन्द्राद्यौ यदुपु तुर्वशेषु यद्दुष्टुवनुपु पुरुषः ।

† यदुल्लाघनविं तुर्वशे यदौ इवे वाभय मा गतम् R.V., VIII. 10.5.

‡ नि गच्छवीडनवीं दुष्टुवय वटिः शता सुषुपुः पट् सहस्रा, etc., R.V., VII. 18.14.

§ Elsewhere in R.V., VIII. 39.8, we find mention of the *Sapta-mānavāḥ*. It is not clear what it means. The seven Indus tribes?

tribes mentioned above, fought against Sudās, a powerful chief whose small army defeated a League of Ten Kings. To the north and west of the region occupied by the five tribes were a large number of other tribes whose location we have mentioned roughly. None of these, however, attained to any conspicuous position.

To the east of the region were a number of tribes who were destined to become more and more prominent as time went on.
Eastern advance.

In spite of a lack of connected history, we have clear indications that a struggle for political supremacy came to be waged among tribal leaders. Evidently, this struggle had begun earlier. In it two or three tribal groups were engaged and a number of rival dynasties had made themselves conspicuous. It is difficult to construct a systematic history of all these rival tribes or of the struggle among their ruling dynasties, but from the scattered isolated facts which can be gathered, we see clearly that this fighting had been going on over a wide area.

Thus, according to the R.V. (VI. 27.7, IV. 15.4), a Śrñjaya king, Daivavātā, defeated Sāhadevya Somaka, Rig-Vedic conquerors. carried his arms further, and won supremacy over the Vṛcīvantas (R.V., VI. 27.5) allied with the Turvaśas.

The Yadus made an attack on two chiefs, Arṇa and Arya-Citraratha, and these were killed in a battle on the Sarayu.

Another recorded tradition shows that a line of kings, whose names show them to have been akin to the Aikṣakas, were fighting against the neighbouring peoples. The earliest named of these was Durgaha. His son was Purukutsa, who seems to have been dispossessed of his throne
The Pūrukuta line.

by an invasion but whose line was saved by the fortitude and activity of his wife, the Purukutsāni. Her son, Trusadasyu, the hero of a legend and the author of a hymn which makes him a half-god, attained celebrity and renown as a ruler and conqueror.

The Yadus and Turvaśas had maintained between themselves a close alliance, and their raid to the East and conquest of Arṇa and Ārya Citraratha has already been mentioned.

All these, however, had to face a new line of energetic rulers. The early history of this line is unknown, but we hear of a Bharata prince, Divodāsa Atithigva, son of Vadhryaśva, gaining victories over the Yadus, Turvaśas and Paṇis and gaining fame as a sacrificer.

His son was probably Pijavana, and his grandson was Sudās, whom Rig-Vedic hymns connect with the Tṛtsus, whose origin is hardly explained. The Tṛtsus appear in Rig-Vedic accounts connected with Sudās who also gained over the support of the Bharatas. With the small support he thus gained, Sudās associated with himself the priests Biśvāmitra and (later on) a Vasiṣṭha. This spiritual support, together with his superior skill, made him invincible and he gained a series of victories over his enemies. The story of his successes is remarkable and forms a landmark in the early history of the Vedic tribes.

We have, in this case also, no connected narrative. But in the hymns composed by the priests Vasiṣṭha or Visvāmitra we find his successes glorified, and his victory attributed to divine aid. We are told of two battles, one on the Paruṣṇī, and the other probably on the Yanunā. Of the first of these, well-known as the Dāsa-rājña or Ten King's Battle, we have Vasiṣṭha's description.

In R.V., III. 53.11, we have an account from Viśvāmitra referring to Sudās's conquest of the four quarters and the performance of Aśvamedha :

viz., उप प्रेत कुशिकाद्येतयध्मज्ञं रथे प्र मुच्चता सुदासः
राजा वृक्षं जड्बन्तप्रागपागुदगथा यजाते वर आ पृथिव्याः ।

Vasistha's hymn is more explicit and gives more information. He begins by narrating all the gifts he gained from Sudās and incidentally gives us his ancestry. His father seems to have borne the name Pijavana, while his grandfather, Devavān.

हे नम देववतः शते गोर्डा रथा वधमन्तां सुदासः ।
अहन्मे पैजवनस्य दानं होतेव सद्य पर्यमि रेभन् ॥ 22.

यस्य चवो रोदसौ अन्तरुवीं शोर्णशोण्णं विवभाजा विभक्ता ।
समेदिन्द्रं न स्रवती गृणन्ति नि युध्यामधिगिशाद्भौके ॥ 24.
इमं नरो मरुतः सञ्चातानु दिवोदासं न पितरं सुदासः ।
अविष्टना पैजवनस्य केतं द्रुषाश्च क्वमजरं दुवोय ॥ VII. 18. 22—25.

The same hymn throws further light on the humble circumstances from which Sudās had risen and his victory was compared with the victory of a goat over a lion, the cutting of a stake with a needle.

आप्नेण चित्तदेकं चकार सिंहां चित्पेत्वे ना जघान ।
अव सक्तोर्विश्यावृद्धिन्द्रः प्राय चक्टविश्वा भोजना सुदासे ॥

R.V., VII. 18.17.

Further, it gives us more details of the wars and conquests of Sudās. We hear of the attack of the Turvaśas, Druhyus and

of the Bhṛgus (VII. 18.6), the death of four enemy kings, Śrutā, Kavadha, Vṛddha and Druhyu by drowning, the conquest by Sudās of the seven-walled forts of the enemy and the capture of the Ānava settlements (VII. 18.12—13). We hear also of Sudās's victory over the confederated Yadus (VII. 19.8) and over king Kavi, son of Cayamāna (VII. 18.8), over the two Vaikarnas (VII. 18—10 and 11), over king Bheda (VII. 18.19) and the submission of the Ajas, Śigrus and Yakṣus.

In this way, Sudās became one of the earliest conquerors, and as such his name figures in the tradition
Sudās's ancestry. recorded both in the Vedas and the Brāhmaṇas.

The Epic and the Purāṇas, however, throw little light on his history. We hear nothing about the Tṛtsus, who are so inseparably connected with him, or about Divodāsa or Pijavana. His name itself does not occur in the Bhārata list* in the Purāṇas. Consequently, we have the greatest difficulty in identifying him with any particular line, especially in relation to his recorded ancestry. For the present, we should not trouble ourselves with these knotty problems, which, though very important, do not stand in the way of our studying the political institutions of the Aryans.

In spite of continuous inter-tribal fighting, there is evidence Tribes conscious of common origin. to prove that the tribes were conscious of their kinship or their common descent. Thus, Manu was venerated as the founder of organised social life, the introducer of agriculture, or the kindling of fire and its

* At the present time, it is difficult to identify Sudās or his line with any of the Epic or Paurāṇika dynasties. The name Sudās occurs both in the Ayodhyā and the North Pāñcāla lists. Mr. Pargiter is disposed to identify him with the North Pāñcālas (See " Indian Historical Tradition," pp. 7, 37, 100, etc.)

worship. A similar tradition exists about Pr̥thi Vainya, and this was common among the tribes. Common, also, were the gods and deities worshipped by them. Many of the names from which a traditional descent of the tribes is claimed in the Epics or the Purāṇas occur in the Vedic hymns. Among these, we have Manu, the founder of the Paurāṇic Mānava dynasties, Ikṣāku Pururavāḥ and Ilā, the founders of the Paurāṇic Aila race, Āyu, Yayāti Nāhusya, Pūru and some Bhāratas.

Some of the tribes seem to have been closely associated with each other and probably in those days of constant warfare, tribal leagues and unions were formed either for the sake of self-preservation or for conquest. The close relation existing among the Anus, Pūrus, Druhyus, Yudus and Turvaśas, has already been narrated. This close relation is explained by the Epic writers, who make the five tribes descend from the common ancestor Yayāti.

Another instance of such tribal unions for political purposes was the 'League of Ten Kings' against Sudās. Not only Aryan tribes were taken in these leagues, but even non-Aryan peoples were called upon to join either side.

Before we pass on to an enquiry into the political institutions of the tribes, we must make some observations on the stage of political evolution attained by the Aryan communities. The generally accepted view is that the Rig-Vedic hymns reveal to us the sudden advent of a number of invading tribes into the Indus Valley. This, however, is not borne out by the Vedic evidence. The tribes had evidently been long settled in the country, and were advancing eastward. Constant fights were going on and in the

Nature of Vedic

midst of these, a number had succeeded in establishing their superiority over others. Lastly, it is also clear that the primitive tribal ideas of seclusion and local independence were giving place to imperialistic lust for expansion and conquest.

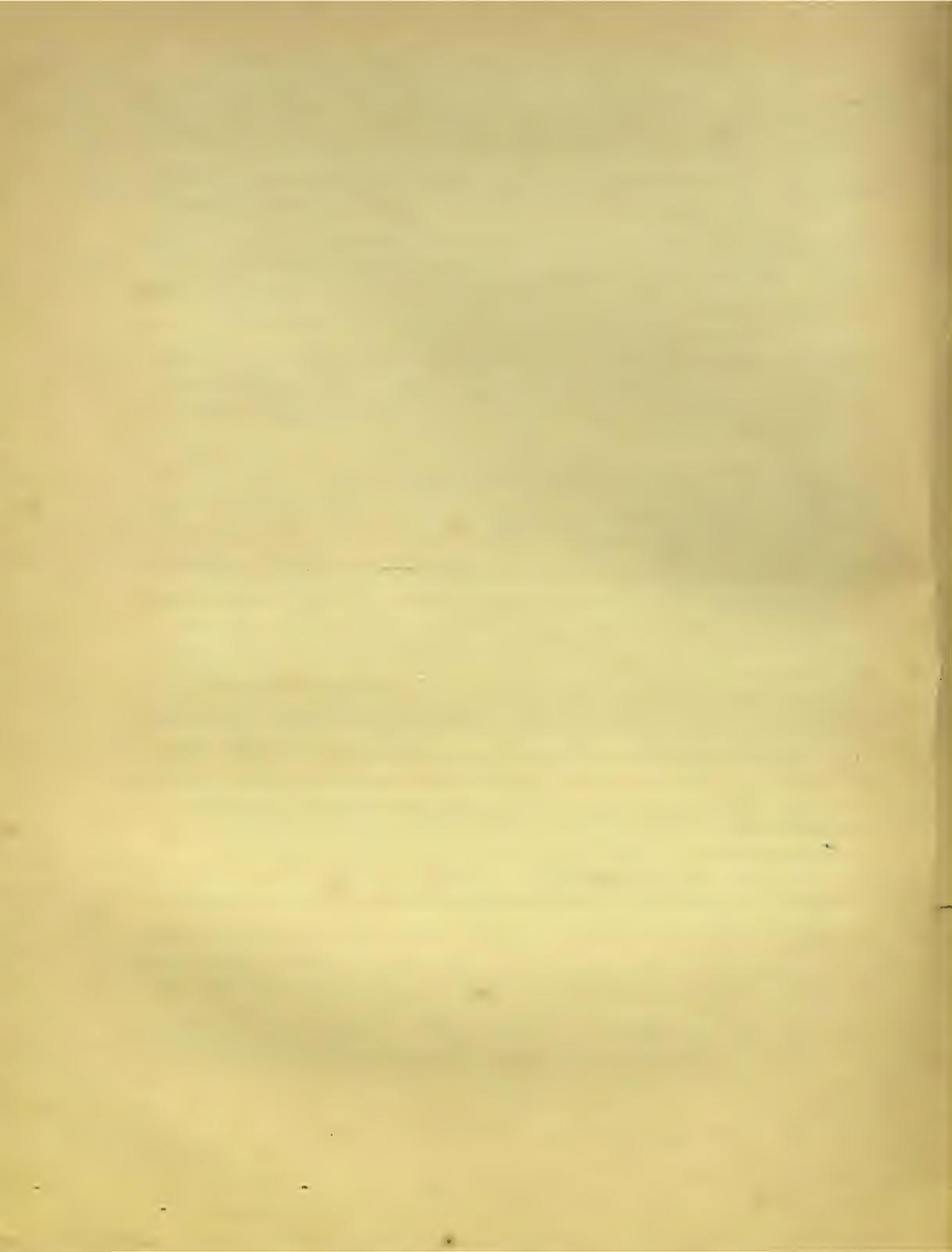
The bands of Aryan settlers were constantly advancing Centre of activity shifting to the east. towards the east. By the time of the Tenth Mandala or of the Nadistuti hymn, they had advanced as far east as the Yamunā, Gaṅgā and the Sarayu, and were not confined to the Punjab as many have supposed. The centre of political activity was fast shifting to the east and tribes like the Kurns or Bharatas, which became prominent in later history, were laying the foundations of their greatness, in the so-called Madhayadeśa.

NOTE.—It is yet to be ascertained whether these above divisions had reference to the whole folk or to the ruling Kṣatriyas only. The evidence of the Purāṇas or the Epic makes us incline to the latter view. In that case, the term tribe cannot be applied to some of these, which were rather the septs of the Kṣatriya ruling families. In regard to these, we ought to keep an open mind as yet.

The construction of a connected narrative from these isolated facts in the hymns is possible only with the help of the Epic and Paurāṇic dynastic lists. But the errors and contradictions of the various Purāṇas stand in our way.

In the light of Paurāṇic evidence, the struggle was confined to the various branches of the Pauravas, in which the other tribes joined. Sudās was a Pañcāla and a Bharata. His line became prominent for a time but its ascendancy ended with Sāhadevya Somaka, one of Sucās's successors. The Śrījayas, another Pancāla line, became powerful for a time and ultimately the Karus became the dominant power.

In the light of the Purāṇas, Purukuta and his line ought to be regarded as Aikṣakas. There is little evidence to connect Purukutsa with the Pārus.



Early Kingship

BY the time, even, of the oldest hymns of the Rig-Veda, kingship appears to have become almost universal among the Vedic tribes. Not only is royalty mentioned as existing among all of them but we have speculations as to its origin or importance.

Two streams of tradition relating to the origin of Monarchy i.e. Vedic tradition—those relating to Manu and to Pṛthu Vainya.

The Vaivasvata hymns* speak of the services of Manu and incidentally throw a flood of light on the social conditions of the days preceding his election. To Manu was

* According to R.V., I. 36.10, the gods brought fire for Manu, e.g., यं ता देवासो मनवे दधुरिह यजिञ्च इत्यवाहन्. The same idea is found in VIII, 19.21. e.g. दैति गिरा मनुहिंत यं देवा दृतमरति न्ये रिरैः। The idea of Manu as the first worshipper or organiser of social life occurs in VIII. 30.2, viz., इति स्तुतासो असथा रिशादसो ये स्य चयश्च विश्वच। भनोदेवा यज्ञियासः।
.....मा नः पथः पित्राण् मानवादधि दूरं नैष पवावतः।

So is Manu described as the first performer of Sacrifice (VIII. 27.7).

The same hymn contains a prayer for protection from oppression and the establishment of fraternal union. (VIII. 27. 9 & 10).

वि नो देवासो अहुङ्किद्र शर्म यक्षत।
न यद्युराइसवो नु चिदनितो वक्ष्यमादवर्षति ॥ ८
अन्ति हि वः सजात्वं रिशादसो देवासो अस्त्रायम्।
प्रथा: पूर्वम् सुविताव बीचत भव सुवाय नव्यसे ॥ १०।

attributed not only the great service of establishing peace among men, but also the invention of sacrifice, the introduction of fire and probably of agriculture. (See R.V., VIII. 27.15 and I. 36.10, VIII. 19.21.) The other tradition regarded Pr̥thu as the earliest king among men. He, too, was credited with the invention of agriculture and was regarded as the first of anointed who performed the great service of ensuring peace among men.

Apart from these, there are other traditions in the Vedic literature, especially in the Brāhmaṇas, which (in addition to the two above) tell us something as to the origin of Monarchy. One of these, which is contained in the Aitareya Brāhmaṇa, not only throws light on the speculations of the age, but tells us something more. In that work, we are told of the coronation of Soma and Indra and the story of the latter's Mahābhiseka. In that account, we are told incidentally that the Devas and the Asuras were constantly fighting. Being repeatedly defeated, the Devas enquired of the causes of their failure. To their want of a leader was attributed their defeat and so they elected Indra as their king.

This story is indeed a clue as to the earliest speculation relating to the causes and circumstances that gave rise to Monarchy.*

While these speculations point to the recognition of the earliest king as the greatest benefactor or his evolution from the successful military chieftain, another theory of the origin of

The same traditions about Manu and Pr̥thu are found in the Brāhmaṇas, e.g., मनुवेवस्तो राजेनाह नस्य मनुवा विश् and पशुवै रैखो मनुवाणाम् मधमीऽभिषिधेति etc.

* देवासुरा वा एष लोकेषु समयतल...तास्मीऽसुरा अजयत्. देवा चतुरद्वाराजतया वै नो जयति राजानं करता महाइति ते सोमं राजानमकुर्वते सोमेन राजा सर्वां दिशोऽजयन्। Ait. Br. I. 14, 23; also the VIIIth Pañcikā.

Monarchy may be suggested—*i.e.*, Monarchy arose out of the elaborated authority of the Patriarchs or *Prajāpatis*. This theory may receive support from passages, which speak of the aspirations of some sages like Viśvāmitrā who prayed for kingship. Some such passages have been interpreted to prove that in earlier periods, the tribes and clans lived under patriarchs. On examination, however, the evidence of such passages seems to be rather inconclusive, inasmuch as, the very prayer for kingship shows that the institution of Monarchy had gained ground already.

Monarchy, as we have said, had become almost universal. Almost all the tribes like the Yadus, Pūrus, Anus, Druhyus or Turvaśas, had their own line of kings, and what proves the universal acceptance of the institution more is the fact, that, the rulers of the tribes are designated either by the name of the tribe itself or by some epithet derived from the tribe-name.* Monarchy moreover, seems to have become confined to particular families, and this view is easily supported even by the meagre data supplied by the Rik hymns. Thus, in the case of Trasadasyu, we find that the kingship of his tribe had descended to him from his grandfather and in spite of his father having lost his throne through an enemy attack. In the case of Sudās, also, there is clear and unmistakable evidence that his family had been vested with ruling authority for three generations if not more.

* Thus, the Yadu king is simply described as *Yadu*, the king of the Turvaśas simply as *Turvaśa*. The Anu king is merely spoken of as *Anu*.

Epithets, like *Caidya* applied to king *Kasu*, *Sṛñjaya* applied to *Daivavāta*, *Uṣṇarāṇī* applied to the queen of the *Uṣṇaras*, go to prove the very close connection between such princes and their tribes, and also, the almost universal character of Monarchy in the Rig-Vedic period.

Ordinarily, kingship seems to have been confined to a particular family, to the exclusion of outsiders. Prominence of the royal family. Purely hereditary descent from father to son according to the laws of primogeniture had not become the general principle in the oldest period. The pre-eminence of the ruling clan, and the vested rights of princes claiming descent from the same ancestor stood in the way of the establishment of autocracy. The people again, were a powerful and dominant factor standing in the way of an irresponsible exercise of authority. The state of affairs was however not uniform. In several tribes, the rights of all the other princes went to contribute towards the establishment of various forms of oligarchical government.

Zimmer believed in the existence of oligarchies. We Oligarchies. have, however, no account of these oligarchies, and it is difficult to pronounce any definite opinion, since, the mass of Rig-Vedic hymns shows a fast transition to an advanced type of monarchy. The influence of various factors, including the ethnic environment, brought in changes, and affected the normal course of evolution and as such, various types of monarchy or oligarchy came into existence, as we shall see very soon.

In the Rig-Vedic hymns, we have no direct allusion to republican institutions. This, however, proves nothing to the contrary and we have reasons for believing that republicanism continued to exist and survived for a longer period among the tribes on the outer fringe, especially among the Vrātyas or those who did not directly come under the influence of the rising Sacerdotalism.

The main political forces which contributed to this almost universal acceptance of monarchy, were the migration of the tribes from the hilly or border regions to the plain, and the constant attacks of the hostile aborigines, to which the advancing tribes were exposed. A similar change is noticeable in the history of the Teutonic tribes. "War begat the king" has been the conclusion of eminent authorities on Teutonic or Anglo-Saxon history and what was true in the West, was not altogether negligible in the case of the Indian Aryans.

Monarchy, however, was as yet not established on a solid foundation, as far as the security or the permanence of royal authority or privilege was concerned. The chief obstacles to the irresponsible exercise of royal authority were :—

(a) the vested rights of the king's own kinsmen, who were ever ready to displace the ruling princes, by taking advantage of enemy attacks, or the discontent of the subjects. This importance of the royal kinsmen who remained "equals" to the king is to be inferred from various passages. These speak of *Rājanah* by the side of king. In one passage, Yama is said to have his *Sabhāsada rājanah* (A.V. III. 29).

(b) the alertness on the part of the people, ready to take up arms, whenever the king proved tyrannical or whenever his exactions injured them. They could at the same time be made use of by any ambitious prince, who could win them over with promises or caresses. In the body politic, the personal element predominated and personal relation between the king and the subject was the only political bond. The *Rāstra* or the community was not considerable and as such, popular anger or discontent was fatal to the king.

Popular opinion, was thus a thing which the king was bound to take into consideration. As yet they had not sunk into the position of *Prajāḥ* (meaning both children and subjects, but originally meaning only the former) but were the free *Viśāḥ*.

The king, therefore, was bound to rely on the goodwill and support of both these elements. The influence of the former was immense and this is confirmed by the evidence of the hymns of the Rig-Veda or the Atharva Veda. The evidence of the former book is rather scanty, but when we come to the latter work, we find that the kinsmen of the king, his own relatives, together with a number of other important personages, had formed a body of men, who selected the ruling prince and probably guided his conduct. The following passages from the Atharva Veda fully illustrate our point. Thus, in one passage of the Atharva veda (I. 9, 3 & 4) the priest clearly invokes the help of Indra, Agni, Varuṇa and other gods to "prostrate beneath our feet the king's enemies and rivals and to exalt him high above his kinsmen."

e.g. सप्ना अस्मदधरे भवन्तु नम् नाकू मधि रोहयेमम् ।

तेन त्वमन् इह वर्धयेम सज्जातानां श्रैष्टा आ धेष्ठेनम् ॥

In a large number of hymns we find the same idea. Thus, in Atharva Veda, in another hymn (III. 4) on the occasion of royal inauguration, the king is told that the "tribesmen shall elect thee for kingship.....and that kinsmen (*Sajāvāḥ*) inviting thee shall go to meet thee ; with thee also will go Agni as an active herald."

e.g. त्वां विशो हणातां राजग्राय त्वामिमाः प्रदिशः पञ्च देवोः ।

अच्छ त्वा यन्तु इविनः सज्जाता अमि दूतो अजिरः सं चरातै ॥

Atharva Veda III. 5, is more explicit and it mentions some
 The Rājakṛts. of the prominent people who participated
 in the nomination of the king-elect to the
 people. These are mentioned in connection with the magical
 powers of the *Parṇa* amulet which was supposed to bring
 success to the king. Of those who are mentioned, are
 "sagacious builders of cars, clever and skilful artisans, the
 kings (rājānah), king-makers (rāja-kṛtāḥ), the *Sūtas* and the
 village-leaders" Cf.

ये धौवानो रथकाराः कर्मारा ये मनौषिणः ।
 उपस्तीन् पर्णं मह्यं त्वं सर्वान् कर्खभितो जनान् ॥
 ये राजानो राजकृतः सूता ग्रामस्थु ये ।
 उपस्तीन् पर्णं मह्यं त्वं सर्वान् कर्खभितो जनान् ॥

A. V., III. 5, 6 & 7.

The Rājakṛts or Rājakartāraḥ thus wielded immense influence and their support was vital to the king, inasmuch as this saved the king from rivals. This rivalry was so keen that we have charms and magical formulae uttered for its destruction, directed not only against those that were living but those yet unborn, as stated in the following :

अम्ने जातान् प्रणुदा मे सुपत्नान् प्रत्यजातान् जातवेदो तुदस्त् ।
 अध्यस्यदं क्षणुष्व ये पुतन्यवोनागमस्ते वयमदितये स्वाम ॥

A. V., VII. 34

It is needless to multiply instances, for there are many more which can be cited to prove the existence and the influence of the Elders and king-electors. The importance of each of these is apparent. The *Grāmanī* represented public opinion, the *Sūta* represented the army, and the *Rathakāra* had

attained prominence owing to the importance of the chariot in war. Two more verses speak of the insecurity of the regal sway and the constant enmity of brothers or outsiders (A. V., I XXIX. and XXX.).

In the first of these (A. V., I. XXIX.), the king invokes the amulet (*mani*) to "increase the strength of regal sway, to put down all who menaced the king and to make him the sole ruler of the tribe." Cf.

तेनास्मान् व्रह्मणस्यते भिराद्धाय वर्धय ॥ १
 अभिवृत्य सप्तनान् भि या नो अरातयः ।
 * * * * *
 राद्धाय महं वध्यां सुप्लेभ्यः परामुचे ॥ ४
 सप्तन् चयणो वृषाभिराद्धो विषासहिः ।
 यथा हमेषां वौराणां विराजानि जनस्य च ॥ ६

The next hymn clearly points to the enmity of brothers Rivalry and enmity in addition to that of outsiders when it prays of scions. that "let not death reach him from the hand of brothers, aliens or of other men." Cf.

i.e. मे मं सनाभिरुत वान्यनाभिर्में मं प्राप्तं पौरुषेयो वधो यः ॥

While this constant enmity of kinsmen and rivals made royal authority insecure, the king's tenure of office was also dependent on the acceptance or approbation of the tribesmen. This acceptance seems to have once partaken of the nature of a real popular election. There are indications, however, that gradually the people were being put in the background. Yet, even in the Rig-Veda there are

Popular choice.

evidences that this popular choice and support was vital to the king, and innumerable hymns, passages or similes point to this importance of popular choice. Thus, in Rig-Veda X. 124. 8, we hear of the simile "like subjects choosing a king"—'ता द्वे विश्वो
न राजानं हृणाना बौभृत्सुवो अप हवादतिष्ठन्'

The celebrated Coronation Hymn of the Rig-Veda (X. 173) speaks of the acceptance of the king by the Viśāḥ. The same occurs in the Atharva Veda with some modifications. (R.V., X. 173—A.V., VI. 87-88).

The priest thus addresses the king-elect :

"Come into our midst, remain steadfast and immovable. (May) The people all like (welcome) you and may you not fall from thy position.

"Be ye steadfast here and may ye not come down. Remain here as firm as Indra and uphold the *Rāstra* (or the state). Indra held it fast with his offering of *havis*, for it, Soma and Brahmanas-pati have said the same. Firm the heaven, firm the earth, firm the universe, firm the mountains—so firm be also this king of men (*Viśām*). Let the state held by you be firm through king

Evidence of the Coronation. Varuna, the Deva Bṛhaspati, Indra and Agni.

Steadfast in thy position, thou win over Soma by oblations of butter. Let Indra make you the sole gatherer of the tribute from thy people. (The last verse in the Atharva Vedic hymn means :—"Vanquish you firmly and without fail thy enemies. Let them be crushed under your feet. All the quarters unanimously welcome you and for firmness the Assembly *Samiti*) appoint you.") Cf.

आ त्वाह्नामन्तरेभि भ्रुवस्त्रिताविचाचलिः ।
विश्वा सर्वा वाङ्कन्तु मा तद्राष्ट्रमधि भवत् ॥

इहैवि माप चोष्टा: पर्वत इवाविचाचलिः ।
 इन्द्र इवेह भुवस्तिष्ठेह राष्ट्रसु धारय ॥
 इममिन्द्रो अदौधरहूं भवेण हविषा ।
 तस्मै सोमो अधिव्रतस्मा उ ब्रह्मणस्मिः ॥
 भ्रवा द्यौध्र्वा पृथिवी भ्रवासः पर्वता इमे ।
 भ्रवं विखमिदं जगद् वो राजा विशामयम् ॥
 भ्रवं ते राजा वरणो भ्रवं देवो छहस्मिः ।
 भ्रवं त इन्द्रवानिष्ठ राष्ट्रं धारयतां भ्रवम् ॥
 भ्रवं भ्रवेण हविषाभि सोमं सृशामयि ।
 अथो त इन्द्रः केवलीर्विशो वनिहतस्करत् ॥
 [भ्रवो चुतः प्र सृशोहि शवृच्छत्ययोऽधरान् पादयत् ।
 सर्वा दिशः संमनसः सप्तोचीर्ध्र्वाय ते समितिः कल्पनामिह ॥

(Variant of A.V., I.88.33.)

To this must be added the evidence we may gather from a large number of Atharva Vedic hymns. One has already been cited (e.g. III.*4 of the Atharva

Atharva Vedic evi-
dence.

Veda), in which the tribesmen are said to select the king (तां विशो द्वयातां राज्याय). In many of these, the use of the root वृ (वृद्ध-वरणे) is indeed remarkable and points to a real selection rather than mere approval. Another, which seems to be a variant of a stanza taken from R.V., X. 173, prays that Indra may make all the

* This hymn, A. V. III. 4. 4 & 6 contains the passage—

अशिना लाये विवावदो भा विष्ये देवा महतस्वा वृयन्तु ।

इन्द्रेन्द्र भवुषाः परेहि सं राजास्या वद्यैः स'विद नः । ०

In regard to the word Varunaih, Weber suggested that they were the electors from
Vr. to elect.

tribesmen or subjects unanimous in their loyalty only to the king. Cf.

ध्रुवं ध्रुवेण हवियाव सोमं नयामसि ।

यथा न इन्द्रं केवलीचिंशः संमनस्त्वरत् A.V., VII. 94.

In A. V. VI. 73, there is another hymn containing an invocation by the priest and also by the king afterwards to the clansmen and this shows how invaluable to the king was the allegiance of the subjects. We do not quote the whole but only the passages in which the clansmen are called upon to be "unanimous and loyal" and in which the king asks them to "stand firm and not to forsake him" and that in him might be their "sweet resting-place." Cf.

पह यातु करुणः मोमो अग्निर्वृहस्पतिर्वसुभिरेह यातु ।

अस्य श्रियमुपसंयात सर्वं उग्रस्य चेतुः संमनसः सजाताः ॥ १

.....
हहैव स्त माप याताध्यस्मत् पूषा परस्तादपथं वः कणोतु ।

वास्तोस्पतिर्नु वो जोहवीतु मयि सजाता रमतिवौ अस्तु ॥ ३

The people, thus, had a voice in the selection of their king. People's voice in In the absence of details, it is impossible to the election of kings. form any idea as to how they exercised their authority, but whatever evidence we may gather enable us to come to the conclusion that not only were they in the habit of meeting for the purpose of royal election, but they asserted themselves whenever the king was in the wrong. On important occasions, they were called into the "Samiti" or the "Assembly"

and their opinion guided the king. Of this Assembly, we shall speak very soon. Already one passage has been cited in which the unanimity and the allegiance of the tribesmen assembled in the *Samiti* is prayed for.

Such, indeed, was the state of royalty—dependent on popular choice for its accession to office and dependent on popular allegiance for its continuance in authority. The position of the king was doubly insecure. He was assailed by his own rivals—by men of his own blood—of his own family and then occasionally by his own subjects. His life itself was constantly in danger. To protect him, we have again recourse to the protection of the gods; we have prayers for his long life and safety. Indeed, there is one hymn in the Atharva Veda which invokes the protection of the various gods, and of the Vasus specially, so that he may live long to the length of a hundred years and that "death may not reach him from the hands of brothers or aliens." The gods are requested to save him from "hundred modes of death." Moreover, as is clear, the idea of Treason had as yet not grown, and the king was no better than an ordinary individual.

In such a state of society, the king could neither claim divinity, nor had he any prerogatives. Legitimacy could not guard him against popular wrath and tyranny or unrighteousness meant death or deposition. Indeed we have charms and formulae to save the king and prayers for the restoration of popular favour and even for restoring deposed kings.

Some of these hymns speak in clear terms that deposition of a king was often the result of popular wrath.
Deposition of princes.

In a later age, the composer of the Kausika Sutra embodied these hymns in that work, which contains spells and charms for removing ills of all description. In one of these we have the following prayer :

"Let Indra call thee hither to those people. Fly hither to these people as a falcon. (3)

May the hawk bring the man who must be summoned, from far away in alien land, an exile.

May both the Asvins make thy pathway easy. Come, and unite yourself with him, ye kinsmen. (4)

Let thine opponents call thee back. Thy friends have chosen thee again.

Indra and Agni, all the gods, have kept thy home amid the tribe. (5)

He who disputes our calling thee, be he a stranger or akin.

Drive him, O Indra, far away, and do thou bring this man to us." (6) [A. V. III. 3, from the 3rd verse to the end].

Here we give the text :

। । । । ।
अन्द्रयस्त्वा राजा करुणी हृयतु सोमस्त्वा हृयतु पर्वतेभ्यः ।
— — — — —
इन्द्रस्त्वा हृयतु विडभ्य आभ्यः श्वेनो भूत्वा विश आ पतेमा ॥ ३
— | — | — | — | — | — | — | — |
श्वेनो हृव्यं नयत्वा परस्मादन्यक्षेत्रे अपरुद्ध चरन्तम् ।
— | — | — | — | — | — | — |
अश्विना पन्थां कृषुतां मुगं त इमं सजाता अभिसंविशध्वम् ॥ ४
— | — | — | — | — | — | — |
हृयन्तु त्वा प्रतिजनाः प्रति मित्रा अवृपत ।
— | — | — | — | — | — | — |
इन्द्रानी विश्वेदेवास्ते विशि क्षोममदीधरन् ॥ ५
— | — | — | — | — | — | — |
यस्ते हवं विवदत् कजातो यश्च निष्ठयः
— | — | — | — | — | — | — |
अपाचमिन्द्रं तं कृत्याथेम मिहात्र गमय ॥ ६

The Kausika Sutra also uses A. V. III. 4 and I. 9 as charms for restoring deposed princes, as well as for the recovery of

popular allegiance. Specific instances of deposition are not known. Sayana attributes the deposition of Purukusta to a foreign attack. The epic tradition about the deposition of Vena does not occur, though Vena's name is mentioned.

But, if royalty in the early Vedic age was thus wanting in security and in the permanence of the allegiance of the people, there is clear indication that powerful factors were contributing towards the permanence of royal authority. Forces contributing to the consolidation of the king's position. A careful analysis of the coronation Hymns clearly shows that the priestly sections were harping on the necessity of the consolidation and permanence of regal authority and as such they were echoing the opinions of a large section of the people. Furthermore, owing to the influence of sacerdotalism, the regal office was gradually coming to be associated with more and more important functions. In the eyes of the priests and consequently of a large section of the people, the royal functions were but the terrestrial counterparts of those vested in the divine rulers of the universal forces. The anthropomorphic ideas, which had contributed to the conception of the *Devas* and their functions, were reacting again on the political concepts, which had given rise to the former.

*Lastly, as we proceed, we find that the priests were not only harping on the parallelism between the duties of the king and of the *Devas*, but some of them were going so far as to regard the king as the master of the universe, and a partaker of the tributes to the universal rulers.*

In later Coronation Hymns we find the gradual progress of these ideas. In the Rig-Vedic Coronation Hymn (X. 173), the composer prays for an immovable position. His idea of a merely permanent fixed position is taken from *Dhruva* or the Pole-star. He harps on the immovable position of the heavens, the earth, the universe and of the mountains. He reminds the

king of the success of Indra, owing to his *havīḥ*-offering, and prays to the divine rulers, Indra, Varuṇa, Bṛhaspati and Agni for the success of the king.

The Atharva-Vedic hymns go farther than this. They claim for the king many more privileges. In the Rig-Vedic hymns, there is the prayer that the king is to be the sole tax-gatherer, but in the following Atharva Vedic hymn, we have the prayer that the king might become "the head and chief of princes" (क्षत्राणामयमस्तु राजेन्द्रः), the sole "lord of the people" (विशां विश्पतिरस्तु राजा), "sole treasure lord" (धनपतिधनानां), the beloved of Indra (इन्द्रप्रियः), the beloved of cattle, plant and animals (प्रियो गवामोषधीनां पशुनाम्), "folk's sole lord and leader and the best of all human rulers" (एकटृष्णं जनानासुत राजासुत्तमं मानवानाम्). Lastly, the king is described as the "sole lord and friend of Indra who feeds on the people." (एकटृष्णं इन्द्रसखा). Here, the hymn is quoted in full : Cf. IV. 22 :

इममिन्द्र वर्धय क्षत्रियं म इमं विशामेकवृषं क्षणु त्वम् ।
 नि_र्मित्रानक्षुह्यस्य सर्वांस्तान् रम्याच्चा अहसुत्तरेषु ॥
 एमं भज यामे अश्वेषु गोषु निष्टं भज यो अमित्रो अस्य ।
 वप्तु क्षत्राणामयमस्तु राजेन्द्र शत्रुं रम्य सर्वमस्ते ॥
 अयमस्तु धनपतिधनानामयं विशां विश्पतिरस्तु राजा ।
 अमित्रिन्द्र महि वर्चांसि धेह्यवर्चसं क्षणुहि शत्रुमस्य ॥
 अस्मै द्यावाष्ठिवो भूरि वामं दुह्याचा धर्मदुष्वे इव धेन् ।
 अयं राजा प्रिय इन्द्रस्य भूयात् प्रियो गवामोषधीनां पशुनाम् ॥
 युनजिम त उच्चरावन्मिन्द्रं येन जयन्ति न पराजयन्ते ।
 यस्त्वा करदेकवृषं जनानासुत राजासुत्तमं मानवानाम् ॥
 उच्चरस्त्वमधरे ते सप्तला ये के च राजन् प्रतिशत्वस्ते ।
 एकवृष इन्द्रसखा जिगोवाज् क्षत्रूयतामाभरा भोजनानि ॥

सिंहप्रतीको विशो अदि सर्वा व्याप्रप्रतीकोव बाधस्य शतून् ।
एकत्रुष्ट इन्द्रसखा जिगोवाच् क्षत्रयतामा विदा भोजनानि ।

Thus in these, while the king's privileges and prerogatives are increasing so as to make room for the universal conception of royal authority, he is described also as the "friend of Indra" (इन्द्रसखा). The next verse we quote, is not only characterised by a more comprehensive conception of royal power but it harps on the parallelism of royal duties with those of the gods, and describes the king as the "sole lord of the earth, of all existing things," "the crown and summit of mankind," the "one and only lord," the "chosen of Indra" and the "partaker of the gods." Owing to its importance we quote the verse in full.* i.e. A.V., VI. 87:

वृषेन्द्रस्य वृषा दिवो वृषा पृथिव्या अयम् ।
 वृषा विश्वस्य भूतस्य त्वमेकत्रुष्टो भव ॥
 समुद्रे ईश सवतामग्निः पृथिव्या वशौ ।
 चन्द्रमा नचत्राणामौशे त्वमेकत्रुष्टो भव ॥
 सम्बाडस्य सुराणां ककुञ्चनुआणाम् ।
 देवानामधंभागसि त्वमेकत्रुष्टो भव ॥

✓ Kingship was thus continuously making advance in the direction of being clothed with more privileges and prerogatives. In the eyes of succeeding generations, the kingly office became more and more glorious and with it veneration for the holder of that office continuously

Increasing veneration.

* Indra, the king of gods, is similarly described [as the sole ruler (*Adhirāj*) of the divine tribes (*Daivi-vishab*).

increased. Speaking from the political point of view, these proved to be the germs which developed into the conception of the universal and indivisible sovereign authority. While, speaking from another point of view, we may recognize in the last two hymns the germs which gradually developed into those ideas regarding the divine nature of royalty and its powers and functions.*

* This constant harping on the parallelism between the duties of kings and of the *Deras* is all that we get in the literature of Vedic hymns or the Brâhmaṇas. The glorification of the royal office is indeed remarkable, and it undoubtedly made a great influence on the Indian mind. But in spite of this, a divine theory never gained ground in the country except in certain localities. The king never became irresponsible to the people nor accountable to God only, as in Europe. He remained, a human personage, a servant of his people, whose immense duties outweighed the privileges and prerogatives of his office. We shall discuss all these points in the next part of the book.

In the meantime, we beg to point out that recently much has been made of these ideas and some scholars have tried to prove that in the eyes of Indians, the royal office was a divine institution. Among these we may mention Prof U. N. Ghosa, M.A., Ph.D., author of *Hindu Political Theories*. He relies on the evidence of R.V., IV. 42 where king Trasadasyu is alleged to describe himself as follows—"Two-fold is my kingdom, that of the whole Kṣatriya race, and all the immortals are ours. The gods associate me with the acts of Varuṇa. I rule over (those of) the proximate form of man. I am the king Varuṇa; on me the gods bestow those principal energies, that are destructive of the Asuras; They associate me with the worship of Varuṇa.....I am Indra, I am Varuṇa, I am those two in greatness. I am the vast, profound, beautiful heaven and earth.....I uphold heaven and earth." A careful examination of the hymn shows that the first six verses, ought to be taken as dedicated to king Varuṇa himself, rather than to the composer Trasadasyu, as has been done by Śāyaṇa (probably Trasadasyu in his trance identified himself with the god Varuṇa; similar instances there are many—cf. Vāk Āmbhrū composing the Devī-Sūkta.) and furthermore the translation of Wilson is not accurate.

Secondly—Even, if we believe in Śāyaṇa who attributes the first six verses to Trasadasyu, there is nothing to prove a divine character appertaining to royalty. Trasadasyu, while he harps on his own greatness as the ruler of men and gods and the upholder of Heaven and Earth, nowhere speaks of his eminence as having been due to his being a king. The truth is, that this king came to be regarded as a mythical

The influence of sacerdotalism and of the priestly order was immense. For their success, kings gradually came to depend on ritual and magic. The desire for divine aid is clearly indicated even by the evidence of the Rig-Veda (cf. Sūdas and the Vasisthas). As the simpler character of society was gradually modified, this desire for divine help became greater than ever, and this is clear from the Atharva-Vedic evidence. This last work contains charms, formulas, amulets and similar things of various description. All these point to the gradual decay of popular control of the administrative machinery and the growth of the privileges of the priestly classes, about whom we find so much in the Brāhmaṇas.

The king stood as the head of the body-politic. He was, in the words of our modern constitutional historians, a representative chief, who symbolised the unity and the sovereign dignity of the tribe. He was the war-lord of the tribe, and his primary duty was to ensure the safety of the tribal community by leading its armies and vanquishing the enemies. As such, he was a judge, who wielded the rod of punishment and chastised those who violated the customs of the tribe.

The protection of the people from foreign invasion and the chastisement of enemies of internal peace seem to have been

personage—a demi-god, owing his birth to the favour of Indra and Varuna, who were won over by the prayers of his mother Purukutsā, as would appear from the ninth verse of the same hymn :

पुष्कुलसानी हि वामदाशहृष्टेभिरिन्द्रावक्षा भग्निभिः ।
अथावाज्ञानं तमदम्युमसा उवहयं ददयुरधेदेवम् ।

His birth and his successful career saved the royal family from ruin and so he came to be regarded as a demi-god—the incarnation both of Indra and Varuna.

not only the chief duties of the king but also his best qualifications to the royal office. This is amply proved by the evidence of Vedic hymns. In more than one place, the king is described as the protector of his people *Gopā Janasya* or *Gopati Janasya* and as such his military qualities are repeatedly extolled. In protection lay his chief duty. In many inaugural hymns, prayer is constantly offered so that his enemies may be prostrate beneath his feet (A.V. I. 9.). In many places, he is described as a Kṣatriya (A.V. IV. 22) or protector *par excellence* in distress and in one passage we find that the newly elected king boasts of his having destroyed his enemies, and probably rests his claim to headship of the tribe on that success over the enemies of the community. (R.V., X. 174.5.)

असप्तः सप्तहाभिराद्वे विषामहि ।
यथाहमेवा भूतानां विराजानि जनस्य च ॥

Furthermore, in the coronation ritual the king is identified with Indra—the war-god and the protector king of the Devas, and with Varuṇa the judge *par excellence* among the deities.

Whatever might have been the position of the king in relation to his followers, e.g., members of the royal family or his subjects, gradually, the sole authority of this individual over the members of the community and their affairs came to be recognized. Of his other functions and duties we find nowhere any detailed account either in the Rig-Veda or in the Atharva Veda. But the following points may be mentioned :—

(1) He was the leader of the community. The Coronation hymns of the Rig-Veda indeed speak of the king as the sole

leader of the *Rāstra* or the community and pray for an unassailable steadfast position. The Yajus hymns on coronation and *Rājasūya* speak of the king's pre-eminent position and leadership of the community. They repeatedly call for the allegiance of the people to his authority, and speak of the king's headship of the "Jāna-rājya." *

(2) He was the war-lord. The chief duty of the king was leadership in war. He was to lead his people both in offensive wars and also in repelling the attacks of foreign enemies. The early kings led raids within enemy territories. In the *Rājasūya* hymns he is described as *Purāṇ bhettā*. Moreover, in some of the coronation hymns the king is designated as *Sapatnahā* or vanquisher of enemies. These refer not only to the non-Aryan aborigines but to the Aryan enemies of the tribe owing allegiance to the king.

(3) As king, he had to act probably as a judge. The early *Samhitās* contain very little reference to the king's administration of justice, but we may presume from various circumstances the fact that the king was a judge. Thus, since, in many hymns the king is identified as the mundane counterpart of Varuna, the judge among gods, we may conclude that in all exceptional cases he presided over criminal cases and had, like Varuna, his spies, the *spasas*, who watched over the conduct of men. The *Ugras* were probably the police officers appointed by the king—so were probably the *Jivagrībh*.

In difficult cases, the adjudication probably took place in his *Sabhā*, where the *Sabhāsadas* and *Sabhācaras* sat as assessors or judges. The Atharva-Veda speaks of the sixteen

* इसे देवा च सप्तं मुवच्चं महते च चाय महते जैडाय महते जानराज्याय—etc., Vaj. Sam. IX. 40.

Rājānah acting as the *Sabhāsadas* of king Yama. Nothing more is known of the judicial activity of kings from the Rig-Veda or the Atharva-Veda. From the evidence of a passage of the *Kāthaka Samhitā* (XXVII. 4), however we may infer the appointment of *Adhyakṣas* to try *Sūdras*.

On these points, the Brāhmaṇas furnish us with more important details. They speak of the king's wielding of the rod of punishment (*Sat. Br. V. 4.4.7*) and his protection of *Dharma*.

Nothing is known of the chief officials, he associated with himself in the government. A number of advisers and military chiefs would have sufficed for the early governmental machinery. But, in course of time, some men of importance were associated with the king. Over and above, there were the *Rājakṛts* or, *Rāja-kartārah* of the Atharva Veda.* That book (III. 5) associates with the king, as we have seen, the Rathakāras and Karmāras, who formed a class of men known as the *Sti* or *Upasti*. In addition, there were the electing chiefs, the *Sūta* and the *Grāmanīśis*.* The Rathakāras or Karmāras rose to importance owing to the fact that the chariot was an important thing in connection with the warfare of those days. The other mechanics were also invaluable owing to their great service in supplying accoutrements of war. The *Grāmanīśis* represented the people of the locality of which they were the executive heads.

* ये चौडानो रथकाराः कर्मारा ये ग्रनीशिः ।

उपस्ती॒ पर्य मङ्गः लं सदौन् क्षेष्मितो जनान् ॥

ये राजानो राजकृतः सूता शामन्वय ये ।

उपस्ती॒ पर्य मङ्गः लं सदौन् क्षेष्मितो जनान् ॥

As we pass on to the Brāhmaṇa literature, we get more information as to the other officials attached to the Royal person. In course of time, the *Purohita* became an important personage. He was not only a royal chaplain, but a moral adviser of the king and acted as a mediator between a king and his people and between the king and the gods. In addition to these, there were the *Ratnins* who included the *Bhāgadugh* (collector of shares), the *Akṣavāpā* (dice-player), the *Sūta*, the *Grāmanī*, the *Senāni* (Commander of the Army), and the *Śāṅgrahītṛ* (the tax-collector). As we proceed, *Sacivas* and *Amātyas* come into prominence, and *Rājapuruṣas* are frequently mentioned. Apart from these, there were the members of the *Sabhā* (advisory body) of which we have already spoken.

As yet, there was no taxation in the proper sense of the word. The king's dignity was maintained by income arising from various sources. The king was entitled to the *Bali* or tribute of his subjects, as we know from the Coronation Hymn of the Rig-Veda (X. 173.8.) where prayer is offered so that *Bali* may be paid to him and to him only. In the Atharva-Veda, the king is granted "a share in villages, kine and horses" (A.V. IV. 22.1), showing that as yet he was not the sole land-owner of the community. Later on, however, royal power increased in this respect.

In the earliest period, the king was not regarded as the owner of the land belonging to the community. Yet, as we proceed downwards, we find the monarch endowed with such prerogatives as make him competent to make gift of villages. Of such gifts we have unmistakable evidences in the Brāhmaṇas and the Upaniṣads. This power of giving away villages has been interpreted by scholars (who

scent the existence of western feudal ideas) as being due to the fact that in theory the monarch was the owner of the land of the community.

This however, is neither supported by the evidence of the Vedic texts nor of the later Smṛti works. Indeed, as we shall see later on, this point has been discussed in detail, in the Sūtras of Jaimini and as a result of this discussion the conclusion is reached that land belongs not to the king, but to the man who tills it. Again, when we make a careful consideration of the theories underlying the principles of taxation, we always find the idea that the tribute paid to the king was not rent for the land but it was a tax out and out, paid to the king as his wages, which were granted to him in lieu of protection.

Consequently, we may explain away this right of gift by the king—

(1) as merely the grant of regalia—which did not affect the real rights of private individuals arising out of clearing and cultivation.

(2) or, these gifts may be described either as grants of uncultivated land or of those belonging to non-Aryan people over whom the donee installed himself as a nominal landlord enjoying certain rents and profits and exercising jurisdiction over the holders of real rights therein.

In lieu of the veneration and respect paid to the king, he was bound to further the interest of the community. The duties attached to the royal office according to the ideas of those days made it incumbent on the holder of the royal office to contribute actively to the welfare of the community. The *Rāstra* idea, as it developed itself, emphasised upon the economic and social needs of the

people, and the king was to do everything to further these. His duties were not merely those of police but he was to look to the well-being of agriculture and to find out sustenance for his people. This is apparent from the following verse of the Yajurveda (IX.) Rājasūya ritual where the priest addresses the king as follows :—

रथं ते राट्। यन्नासि यमनो ध्रुवोऽसि धरणः ।
क्षयै त्वा चेमाय त्वा रथै त्वा पोषाय त्वा ॥

From what has been stated above, Vedic polity may thus be summarised as a political condition in which the governmental powers were distributed among a king, a Council and an Assembly of the people.* It may thus be favourably compared with Freeman's Indo-Germanic polity.

We thus have in the Vedic king, the sole repository of the executive power, while the Sabhā was the advisory body. In this, as we shall see, the chiefs, the prominent members of the royal family, learned Brahmins, the Purohita and other notables had their place. The Vedic hymns themselves give us no information on the constitution of the Sabhā, but its constitution may be presumed from the evidence of later literature. The Rājakṛt, the Grāmanī, or the troop-leaders had presumably places in it. This is not unnatural and seems to be confirmed by the evidence of the constitution of other countries. Naturally, the king's counsellors should be his near kinsmen or

* Ref.—Freeman's Comparative Politics, pp. 43—49. Sidgwick's Development of European Polity, p. 32. See also H. Spencer's Sociology—on Political Institutions Chap. V..

those in whom he could rely and to whom he entrusted the exercise of authority relating to the various branches of administration.

Last of all, as we shall see very soon, there was the *Samiti* which regularly met to express the popular approval of acts either mooted to it for acceptance or to join in state ceremonies. Some Atharva-Vedic passages suggest that the *Samiti* met either to elect the king or to approve of his ascending the throne. A popular gathering to accept the new king subsisted to the last days of Hindu independence.

The Sabha

FROM this account of the evolution of kingship, we pass on to a discussion of the character and constitutional position of those great public Assemblies in which the people met and expressed their opinion freely.

These were two in number :—(1) The Sabha.

(2) The Samiti, which was also called by various other names e.g., *Samgati*, (R.V., X.141.4) or *Samgrāma*. We take the Sabha first.

The word *Sabha* denoting an assembly occurs throughout the Vedic literature. Clearly it meant an assembly or gathering, as it continues to mean even in our own days. But unfortunately, details about its character and composition in the Vedic period are so scanty, that it is difficult to form any idea about it easily.

Indeed, this lack of details has given rise to differences of opinion among scholars. Hille-brandt came to the conclusion that the Sabha and the Samiti were identical, Sabha meaning the place of Assembly and the Samiti, the Assembly itself. Zimmer, on the other hand tried to identify the Sabha, with the village on the evidence of a passage in the *Vājasaneyī Samhitā* (III. 45 and XX. 17), in which prayer is offered to the gods for the expiation of sins that are committed in the village, the *Aranya* and the *Sabha*.

Neither of these views, however, seem to be supported by the general evidence of Vedic literature or by passages in which the word *Sabha* occurs.

Hillebrandts' view seems to fall to the ground, in as much as a passage of the Atharva-Veda, clearly describes the Sabhā and Samiti as two different bodies. This would appear from A.V. VIII, 12. 1. where Sabhā and Samiti are described as the two daughters of Prajāpati. (सभा च समितिशावतां प्रजापतेर्द्वितीयौ संविदाने).

The two are again distinguished and mentioned side by side in A.V. VIII. 10. 5. and XII. 1. 56. Again, in the Atharva-Veda, in the Vṛत्यa hymns, we have the account of the origin of various bodies where the two are separately mentioned. Cf.

A.V., XV. 8 & 9. 2.

सोऽरश्वत ततो राजन्योऽजायत ... स विशेषु व्यचलत् ।
तं सभा च समितिच्च सेना च सुरा चानुव्यचलन् । etc.

"He went away to the people, Sabhā and Samiti and Senā (army) and Surā followed him. He who hath this knowledge becomes the clear house of Sabhā, Samiti, Senā (army) and Surā (wine)."

In another place, too, they are clearly mentioned side by side i.e. in A.V., VII. 1. 12.

We turn next to discuss the view of Zimmer that the Sabhā was the village-assembly. The two passages, cited by him to prove this connection, are found in Vaj. Samp. III. 45 and XX. 17. In both of these, prayers are offered to expiate various sins committed by men. The first passage runs as follows:—यद्ग्रामे यदरण्ये यत्सभायां यदिन्द्रिये । यदेनसक्तमा वयमिदं तदव यजामहे स्वाहा । The second passage is practically the same as the previous one, though it is slightly modified (यद्ग्रामे यदरण्ये यत्सभायां यदिन्द्रिये । यच्छ्रद्धे यदर्ये यदेनसक्तमा वयं यदेकस्याधि धर्मणि तस्यावयजनमसि ।)

Trans.—“Each fault in village, or in wilderness, in Assemblages or corporeal sense ; each sinful Act, we have done to Śūdra or Ārya—or to either's disadvantage, even of that sin thou art the expiation.”

A careful consideration of this passage shows, that there is hardly anything to warrant a connection between the village and the *Sabhā*. We are no more justified in regarding the *Sabhā* as the village assembly, than we should be in holding it as the assembly of the Aranya or the wild. Evidently, what the reciter of the hymn meant is that expiation for sins be granted to him, for all sinful acts, in ordinary social life in the village in sport (in the Aranyas) or in Assemblies (*Sabha*) during discussion, in relation to those caused by the frailty of senses. (“यामे वसन्तो यदेनः पाष गः सोपदवरुणं चक्रम वातवस्तः । तथारण्ये वसन्तो यदेनो मृगोपदवरुणं चक्रम । तथा सभायां स्थिता यदेनो महाजनतिरस्कारादिकं चक्रम ।”) There is, moreover, hardly any Vedic passage which goes to support the views of Zimmer.

It is difficult, to determine the original character of this gathering. The word *Sabhā* (cf. Ind.-Eu. *Sebh-a*) is derived from a root, closely associated with O.E. *Sibb*, Ger. *Sippe*, Got. *Sibja* all meaning an association of the kin, tribe, family or the clan.

Probably, early *Sabhas* were of this type but later on, with further development the *Sabhā* became not only an association of kinsfolk but of men bound together either by ties of blood or of local contiguity. Consequently, it came to mean any kind of gathering, for religious purposes, for sport, or for discussion of local interest. In a state of society characterised by the free working of public opinion, gatherings for various purposes were very common and their existence is proved by references

to them in literature. Indeed, the Yajus Samhitā, repeatedly (see XVI. 24) speaks of Sabhās and Sabhāpatis. (नमः सभाभ्यः सभापतिभ्यः). R.V., X. 34. 6. speaks of the Sabhā as a dicing-assembley. (सभामेति कितवः पृच्छमानो जिष्वामौति तन्वा शुशुजामः । अद्वासो अस्य वि तिरन्ति कामं प्रतिदीवने दधत आ छतानि ॥)

With these, however, we are not concerned and we try to determine the character of that Sabhā which held a conspicuous place in the political institutions of the community. This Sabhā, which we may designate as the *Political Council*, had hardly any connection with the village, but was a central aristocratic gathering associated with the king. This latter fact would appear later from the consideration of a large number of passages. A number of passages has been cited by Ludwig to prove the high social status of the members of the Sabhās.

1. Thus, in R.V. VIII. 4. 9, in praise to Indra, the priest says, "Oh Indra, your votaries are comely in appearance, they are rich in horses, chariots and kine; they receive wealth, and go to the Sabhā—the delight of all" (अश्वौ रथौ सुरूप इहोमां इदिन्द्र ते सद्धा । खातभाजा वयसा सचते सदा चन्द्रोयाति सभामुप ॥)

2. In X. 71. 10 (सर्वं नन्दन्ति यशसागतेन सभासाहिन सख्या सखायः) Yaśas acts as a friend and gives prominence in the assembly.

3. The third passage, e.g., VII. 1. 4. speaks of the assemblage of the Sujātas. (* * * सुवीरासः शोश्चन्द्र द्युमन्तः । यता नरः समासते सुजाताः ॥)

4. In A.V. XIX 57.2., in connection with the charm against evil dream, we are told that "Princes come together—presumably to make the assembly complete."

To these, again, the evidence of another passage may be added, i.e., of R.V., I. 91. 20, where Soma is spoken of as giving him who offers oblations, a son skilled in house affairs,

and prominent in the *Sabbā* and in sacrifice. (सोमो देतुं सोमो अर्वत्तमाश्च सोमो वौरं कर्मच्च ददाति। सादन्यं विदधा सभेयं पितॄचबर्ण यो ददागदस्मै।)

While the evidence of these passages cannot be taken to be conclusive, they show at least that the *Sabbā* was not the rendezvous of men of all circumstances. Thus, *Sabheya*, is rather a term of distinction. We are further told that the rich men went to the *Sabbā* (VIII. 4. 9). Similarly, R.V., II. 24.13, speaks of *Sabheya Vipras* (उत्तामिठा अतु शृणुन्ति वह्यः सभेयो विषो भरते मती धना etc.)

Then, again, we come to a number of passages which prove an intimate connection of the *Sabbā* with the king rather than supporting Zimmer's contention that the *Grāmanī* presided over the *Sabbā*. True to say, this latter view is entirely the work of his own imagination. To turn to our point, the view that the king was intimately connected with the *Political Sabbā* is proved by the following passages—

(1) In the *Chāndogya Upani*, V. 3. 6, we find the Brāhmaṇa Gautama going to meet the king in his *Sabbā*. (स इ प्रातः सभाग उद्देयाय तं होवाच etc.)

(2) Secondly in Chāo. VIII. 14. 1, Prajāpati, the Lord of the universe is spoken of as having a *Sabbā*. (स आत्मा प्रजापते: सभा वेश्म प्रपद्ये etc.).

(3) The next important evidence connecting the king with the *Sabbā*, is furnished by the *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa* III. 3. 5. 14, where Soma is spoken of as an Emperor or Overlord holding a durbar or court to which under-kings are flocking together. (तत्त राजान्: सभामा:)

The evidence of these passages clearly points to the fact, that apart from the various local *Sabbās* for purposes of meeting,

dice-play or merriment, there was the *Sabbā par excellence*—the political council which by the time of the later hymns and of the Brāhmaṇas came to be associated with the king. This *Sabbā* was evolved out of the changing political circumstances. As the king became the principal factor in the political system of the day, his person came to be associated with rich men of position and the elders whose counsel had so much weight and authority with the community. These formed his advising body and he came to be dependent on their advice and counsel. The evolution of this body was similar to that of the Council of Chiefs among the Teutons, to the Senate among the Romans and the Witanage mot among the Anglo-saxons.

The king could not do without the advice or the agreement of the members who spoke and hotly discussed proposals. This is clearly expressed by the tenor and spirit of A.V., VII. 12. which was presumably uttered by a king.

"In accord may Prajāpati's two daughters *Sabbā* and *Samiti* protect me. May every man I meet, respect and aid me. Fair be my words, Oh! my fathers at the meetings.

2. We know thy name, Oh! Conference, thy name is interchange of talk; Let all the company who join the conference agree with me.

3. Of these men seated here, I make the splendour and the lore my own. Indra make me conspicuous in all this gathered company." [A.V., VII. 12. *Trans. by Griffith*].

While the *Sabbā* was the advisory body to the king, it had other functions too, which it continued to wield to the last days of Hindu Political existence. It acted as a Judicial Assembly. The members of the *Sabbā* acted as assessors, and it was presided over in a later age

by the king himself. The reflection of anthropomorphic ideas led people to credit Yama, the king and judge of the departed, with having a *Sabbā* and a number of *Sabbāsadas*. A. V., III. 29. 1, speaks of Yama's *Sabbāsadas* dividing among themselves 1/16 of hopes fulfilled or of pious deeds (of merit) done on the earth. A second passage of the same book, and of the same hymn extolling the *Sabbā* mentions the *Sabbāsadas*, while R. V. X. 71. 10 contains the following passage.

i.e. सर्वं नन्दन्ति यद्यसागतेन सभासाहेन सख्या सखायः ।
किल्विषस्पृत् पितुषणिर्द्वामरं इतो भवति वाजिनाय ॥

The word *किल्विषस्पृत्* is worthy of note and shows the judicial character of the *Sabbā*, in as much as partiality or misconduct in a trial, made the *Sabbhya*, a sinner. Again, the judicial capacity of the *Sabbāsadas* is further proved by the evidence of a

Its Judicial Character. connection with *Puruṣa-medha*, a *Sabbā-cara* is sacrificed to Dharma (Vāj. XXX. 6: धर्माय सभाचरम्) or the Lord of Justice, (See also Tait. Br. III. 4. 2. 1.)

NOTE.—*Vidatha*.—The existence of councils like the *Sabbā* is also proved by other words. Of these, the *Vidatha* is of importance. The word occurs in Rig-Veda in innumerable passages, but its meaning is disputed. Both took it to mean an assembly for secular or religious ends or for war. Ludwig took it to mean an assembly of Maghvans and Brāhmaṇas. Zimmer took it in the sense of a smaller assembly than the *Sabbā* (Alt. Leh. 117). The authors of the Vedic Index (II. 206) entertain doubts in regard to this meaning. There are however passages in which the meaning "assembly" seems appropriate and Whitney has taken it in that sense (A. V., I. 13. 4).

One more passage of the Atharva Veda (XII. 1. 56), may be cited to prove that the *Sabbā* was distinct from the *Samiti* and it was an important gathering and not merely the Assembly hall. A. V., VIII. 10, also makes it clear. See Jayawali Hindu Polity, pp. i. 21

i.e. ये यामा यदरथ्य याः सभा चलि मूर्खाम् ।
ये सेयामाः सुनिष्ठयस्तेषु चाक्ष यदेम ते ॥

III

The Samiti

APART from the *Sabhā*, which is thus proved to have been the advisory council of the selected few, there remained another important body—the *Samiti* which was also known by other names, i.e., *Samgati* or *Samgrāma*. The word is presumably derived from the root श् to go or come, along with the associative prefix *sam* which intensifies the act of assemblage. It occurs in innumerable places of the Rig-Veda and Atharva Veda, but references to it are fewer in later Vedic literature. We quote a few of the passages with a view to determine its character.

In many places the meaning is rather obscure. Thus, in R.V. I 95. 8. (सा देवताता समितिर्भुव) the meaning is entirely metaphorical and hardly gives any clue to finding out its real character. In other passages the meaning is clearer.

Thus, in R.V. IX. 92. 6, the word though occurring in a simile gives us some idea as to its meaning a collective body. In this passage, king Soma is described as entering a vessel as the priest enters the house containing the sacrificial animal and as a king enters the Samiti. (परि सद्ये व पश्यमान्ति होता राजा न सत्यः समितौरियानः)

Similarly, in another passage (X. 97. 6) in connection with the healing powers of medicinal herbs, as applied by a *Vipra* the author of the hymn refers to the simile of kings coming to the Samiti. (यक्षौषधौः समग्रत राजानः समिताविव। वपः स उच्यते भिषयचोहामौवचातनः ॥)

Two other passages are more explicit and show us the importance of the Samiti in the body politic.

Thus, in X. 166. 4, a victorious king praying for the destruction of enemies—speaks out “Superior I am, Oh ! enemies, and I am come with an all-performing force (धार्मा) and will (take possession) conquer your minds, your actions (Vrata व्रत्य) and your Samiti [अभिभूरहमागमं विश्वकर्मण धार्मा । आ विद्यत्तमा वो व्रतमा वोइचं समितिं ददे ॥]

The evidence of the last hymn of the Rig-Veda is more interesting. There, in X. 191. 3, it shows us its real character and the importance of the business transacted there.

समानो मन्त्रः समितिः समानो समानं मनः मह चित्तमेषाम् ।
समानं मन्त्रमभि मन्त्रये वः समानिन वो इविषा तुहोमि ॥

The last two *ricas*, of which the quoted one is one, are addressed to the god Samgnāmī, or union. We render these as follows—

“Let the mantra of all be the same, mind and thoughts and deliberation be equal. I thus initiate ye to this unity and with (one mind and thought) oblations pray (to the deity).”

Hymns of the Atharva Veda throw more light on the Samiti and help us in determining its functions and character. Thus, in VII. 12, the Samiti along with the Sabha is described as one of the two daughters of Prajāpati. (समा च मा समितिश्वावती प्रजापतेर्द्वितीये संविदाने). The same hymn further describes the Sabha and the Samiti as deliberative bodies where the opinion of the many was expressed and carried weight with the community.

The deliberative character of the Samiti is further proved by A.V., VIII. 10, 5 & 6. The whole hymn is addressed to the

glorification of the Virāj. There we hear of the Samiti and of polite and courtly men coming as guests to the Assembly.

Again, in XII. 1. 56, a hymn addressed to Pr̄thivī in verse, her praise is said to be sung in all gatherings of men. Of these assemblages the Samiti is mentioned along with other such gatherings, viz., Sabhā and Samgrāma.

Furthermore, in the ninth hymn of the book known as the Vr̄ātya book, we have the following account of origin of the Sabhā the Samiti, Senā and Surā, i.e., "He went away to the people. Sabhā, Senā, Surā and Samiti followed him etc."

Lastly, we come to the evidence of some other passages of the Atharva Veda. Of these, the first, A.V., VI. 88, shows the constitutional importance of the Samiti. After coronation, the priest utters the following in order that the king may be established on his throne and the *Samiti* be loyal to him.

ध्रुवा द्यौध्रुवा पृथिवी ध्रुवं विश्वसिद्धं जगत् ।
 ध्रुवासः पर्वता इमे ध्रुवो राजा विग्रामयम् ॥
 ध्रुवं ते राजा वरणो ध्रुवं देवो वृहसप्तिः ।
 ध्रुवं त इन्द्रद्याम्निव राष्ट्रं धारयतां ध्रुवम् ॥
 ध्रुवोऽसुरातः प्र मृणोऽनि शतून्कवृतोऽधरान् पादयस्त ।
 सर्वा दशः संमनसः सध्रीचौध्रुवाय ते समितिः कल्पतामिह ॥

"Firm unmoved do thou destroy thy enemies; make them, those that are thy enemies, fall below thee. Let all the quarters be like-minded and concordant. Let the *Samiti* here suit thee who art fixed."

The Samiti thus, was an Assembly of the people and accord with it was vitally important to the king. The further importance of the Samiti would be apparent from a consideration

of the hymn A.V., V. 19. In that hymn, a Brahmin priest is anathemising, the turbulence of the Vitahavyas and the Śrūjayas who in their pride of power wronged the Bhṛgus, destroyed their cattle and were destroyed in their turn. The Brahmin priest is there uttering a curse on those who destroy the cattle of Brahmins. There he constantly alludes to the catastrophe befalling the *Rāṣṭra* or the kingdom of tyrannical kṣatriya] rulers. After enumerating all the horrors which befall these tyrants and their kingdom, he sums up by saying that "the rain of Mitrā-Varuna falls not on him who wrongs the priest. The *Samiti* (the popular gathering and hence loyalty) does not submit to him and he wins no friend to do his will." [नाकौ समितः कथते न मित्रं नयते वग्म].

A consideration of the evidence furnished by the passages cited above enables us to come to the following conclusion as regards the character of the *Samiti*.

(1) That it was a gathering of the whole folk of the community.

(2) It was the assembly of the *Rāṣṭra*.

(3) That it had a close connection with the Royal person and met on all important occasions like Royal coronation, in times of war—or national calamity. Probably, this *Samiti* was convened to elect and accept the king or to approve of his acts.

Something more remains yet to be said about the *Samiti*.

Its connection with Samgraha. It is significant to note that about all our Indian commentators have taken the word *Samiti* to mean war or battle-array. Thus, Sāyana translates the word *Samiti* by युद्ध or संघाम e.g. समितौ—संघामि (R.V., X. 97.); समितिः—संयन्ति संगच्छन्ते युद्धाय चरेति संघामः (*Com. on VII. 12.*)

Yāska too, (I. ch. II) sometimes assigns to this word the meaning of battle (रणः ..समितिः .. संघामनासानि) though elsewhere,

he attaches the meaning of *Yagña*. (Bom. Ed. pp. 11.). The same idea of war is found in classical literature (See Amara. II. 8, 106) and in the *Mabābhārata* the gathering of princes on Yudhisṭhīra's *Rājasūya* is called a *Samiti*.

Furthermore, it is curious to note in the hymn on the praise of the Earth (A. V. XII. 1) that the word stands side by side with the word *Sampṛāma*, a word, which like the *Samiti* originally meant a gathering (e.g. of villages) but came to mean war in classical literature.

From these evidences, we may further come to the conclusion that probably the word *Samiti* was also applied to mean originally a war-array of the tribesmen. This view seems to gain ground from the comparative study of similar institutions in the early history of other communities. Its early military character may be favourably compared with that of other such assemblies in ancient History.

The freemen of the Homeric age assembled in military array, and decided important questions (Sidgewick P. 34—36). In the case of the

Parallels from the history of other countries.
Teutonic tribes, we have fuller accounts in the pages of Tacitus, where we are told that the armed freemen of the tribe assembled in a gathering and with them rested the real decision of peace and war. "If they disapproved" says Tacitus "they indicated their rejection by murmurs and groans. If they approved they clashed their spears." (Tacitus, Germania. II.)

Likewise, in the case of the Romans, the Assembly was modelled on a military organisation, and thus arose the *Comitia Centuriata*, in which men retained the same place and position as in the army.

Nothing more can be gathered of the Samiti, except that, it was an assembly of freemen and had a recognized position in the body-politic. The later Samritis give us no information and as we proceed onwards, the word Samiti is not mentioned at all. This may be due to the fact that during the later stages of development, when the states grew larger, and the power of

Decay of the Samiti. kings became fully established, the Samiti disappeared as an effective part of the administrative machinery. It was too large to be handled and at the same time the freemen found more interest in their local affairs rather than in those of the tribe. These came to be entrusted into the hands of the king, his ministers and the aristocratic Sabha.

IV

Imperialism and Conquest

THIS simple political ideal of the king elected by the people and governing according to their wishes however did not last long. Probably, the more recent hymns of the Rig-Veda saw the passing away of this *regime*. Free political institutions survived only in some localities, especially in the areas peopled by the so-called *Vṛatyas*; Elsewhere, as in the central region, the complexities of social and political evolution, together with the influence of rising sacerdotalism led to a gradual political decay though masked by the recognition and retention of older forms and formulae. In other regions, especially in the East where the Aryan element became less and less, the ruling families easily turned themselves into irresponsible autocrats.

Influence of Imperialism. Imperialism and lust for conquest made itself felt day by day. The tribal ruler looked to war and conquest as the sources of his own power and yearned after a paramount position, beyond the limit of his own tribe. Partly goaded by greed and avarice, partly actuated by a desire for pre-eminence among equals and partly impelled by the ambition of freeing himself from the popular control, the king of the tribe launched into a career of conquest. The influence of this latter was immense and told heavily on the social and political fabric.

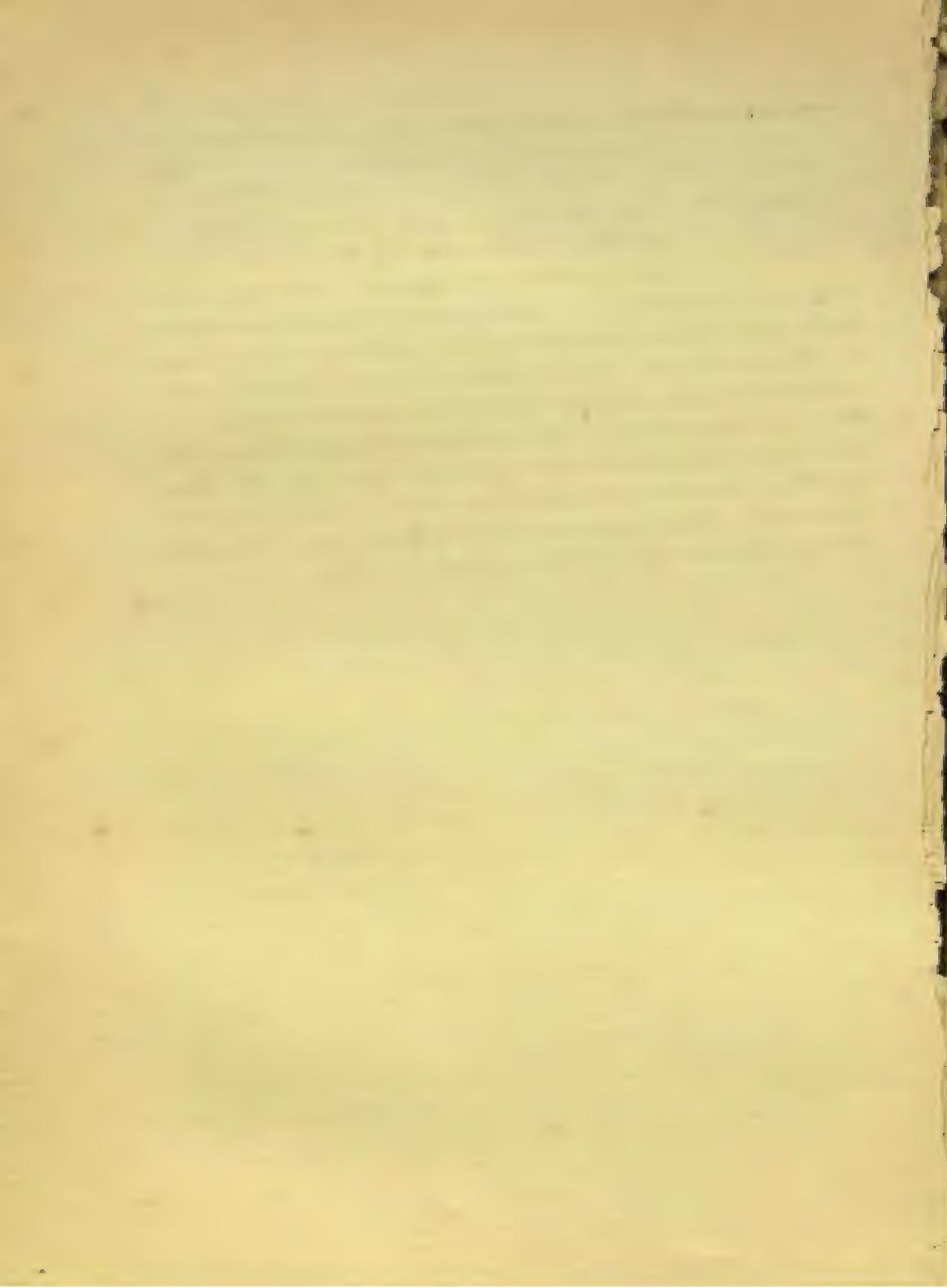
We find not only the germs of this imperialistic idea in the Rig-Vedic hymns but a clear evidence of the Rig-Vedic evidence. struggle for over-lordship Details are lacking, but the hymns contain a number of words and facts, which clearly speak of higher types of sovereign power, for which the princes and chiefs fought. Of such, we have the word *Ekarāj* (Rig-Veda VIII. 37. 3) both in the Rig-Veda and in the Atharva, which meant nothing but a "sole ruler" dominating over a vast area. We have next the word *Samrāj* which meant according to the Brāhmaṇas, a higher type of sovereignty than that exercised by the ordinary king. As a result of the reflection of the anthropomorphic idea, this word is even applied to some of the divine rulers. *Varuṇa* especially is called a *Samrāj* more than once (R. V. III. 55. 7, 56-5; IV. 21. 1; VI. 27. 8; VIII. 19. 32.) The same word, as we shall see later on, occurs in the *Vājasaneyī* and the other *Samhitās*, (V. 32, XIII. 25, XX. 5).

In addition to this, we have another word, e.g. *Adhirāj* which in later literature, undoubtedly meant a suzerain ruler of higher authority. It occurs in the Rig-Veda (X. 128. 9) where the speaker claims higher sovereign power (वस्त्रो रुद्रा आदित्यः उपरस्यम् मीष्म वैत्तारमधिराजमकन्). The same word occurs, in the Athrava Veda (VI. 98. 1, IX. 10. 24), and in the Yajus *Samhitās*—(Taitt. Sam.—II. 4. 14. 2; Maitrā. Samp. IV. 12. 3; Kāt. Sam.—VIII. 17.).

Apart from the mention of such words, we have the clearer evidence of the hymns themselves. From these we know of conquerors like *Trasadasyn*, *Daivavāta*, *Divodāsa*, or *Sudāsa* who all tried to establish their authority over the neighbouring clans and tribes even in the earlier period.

Along with this Imperialism, came the growing influence of Sacerdotalism and its reaction on social and political development. The conquerors trusted in their military prowess but for a moral sanction of their deeds and a formal recognition, they turned to the priesthood the votaries of the divine powers. Great sacrifices were instituted or their character modified to suit the occasion. Of these, we have the Rājasūya which though not alluded to in the Rig-Veda, is mentioned in the Atharva, Yajus and the other Samhitās, the Aśvamedha which is clearly alluded to by the hymns of the Rig-Veda and a number of other such. We shall have occasion to discuss these in detail very soon.

The Sacrifices.



**The Brahmanic Evidence,
New Kingdoms**

AS we pass on gradually to the close of the Vedic Age, we find in the later Samhitās and Brāhmaṇas a clear evidence of a new phase of political evolution. Strictly speaking, there is no clear line of demarcation, separating the age of the Rik hymns from that of the later Samhitās or the Brāhmaṇas, and to speak of the age of hymns in contra-distinction to that of the Brāhmaṇas, will be something un-scientific. The Brāhmaṇas show but a continuity of development and contain very old materials, sometimes older than the hymns themselves.

From the evidence of the Brāhmaṇas, we know that the social fabric underwent momentous changes as the result of the accelerated working of those forces, the germs of which existed in the oldest period. At the same time there was the fast modification of the political system, owing to the modification of the environment and the introduction of new factors therefrom. The importance of this age was remarkable. It was an epoch of conflicts and compromises that marked the transition from a simpler to a complex life. At the same time, political integration came through the channel of religion and in it were evolved those ideas and principles, which influenced the subsequent political development of the country but too deeply.

Gradually, the Aryans spread over a vast plain, the topography of which exerted an influence on their institutions and ideals. During their sojourn in the narrow cut-up valleys of the Punjab, the tribal spirit had subsisted but all this changed with the advance east-ward. The rich plain furnished an extensive field for expansion and the narrower ideals passed away. The various sections marched continually forward, till the spirit of movement died down into a settled life, but at the same time intensified the desire for imperial hegemony and conquest.

Then there were social changes of great importance. The germs of class distinction or those of race among the ruling sections developed into the system of caste and this was fostered by the desire for the preservation of racial purity and identity. In the midst of diverse peoples whom the conquerors found, this desire led to the formation of social grades with more or less clearly defined socio-economic duties assigned to each, the whole forming a federated social organisation. The ruling race,

Brahmanas and Kṣatriyas asserted their supremacy over the others, but they had to yield to the priesthood deriving importance from their connection with the sacrificial art which exercised so great an influence on the minds of a primitive people. This success was not attained easily, but before it was recognised the prince and the priest fought and only after a bitter struggle the former was worsted. The mass of the peaceful Viś formed a separate order or caste, the ranks of the Śūdra were strengthened by the addition of new peoples, assimilated into the fold of Aryan society. Many such new peoples received a recognized place in Aryan society and were regarded as mixed castes.

It is not the place for dilating upon these in detail, but it is clear that the Brāhmaṇa age saw the final Social organisation. recognition of those principles which have influenced the later social evolution of India. All the castes came to be associated with different duties and occupations. The common privileges of the three higher castes came to be recognized, the social excellence of the Brāhmaṇa was admitted, the position of the mixed castes or those by adoption, was regulated and the mutual relation between the Brāhmaṇa and the Kṣatriya laid down. The origin of caste led to speculations which we find embodied in the Brāhmaṇas.

Racial expansion led to racial contacts, which were also fraught with momentous changes. In course of their eastern expansion, the Aryans met various peoples whose influence on them was undoubtedly great. The history of these races is lost and we have no means of studying their influence properly. But it meets the eye of every historian, that the eastern section of Aryan dom came to be distinguished by its peculiar excellence in intellectual life and a new type of political evolution. The East, especially the Kośala-Videha region, distinguished itself by its philosophy and its paternal imperialistic ideal. It produced its philosopher kings the Janakas, its sages like Yājñavalkya, Kapila and Āsuri, and in a later age, its Buddha, Mahāvira and Pārśvanātha and the other formulators of the intellectual and moral ideals of the Vrātya Aryan.

With social changes, religion (if we are permitted to call Changes in the character of Religion. it a religion) changed its character. Its chief interest centred round sacrifice and a maze of complicated rituals and rites. The age of mere humanistic

ideas and aspirations was gone. The place of child-like faith in the gods and their bounty was taken by a desire to understand the root-causes of Nature's great phenomena, the eternal changes and modifications, the sufferings and sorrows of man, the good and evils of human actions, the cravings for joy in life and the means of attaining them. The Organic Theory gained ground (as we may see from the ideas in the *Puruṣa-sūkta*) and the universe was regarded an organic whole, with a unity of purpose. The idea of universal order influenced this religion and sacrifice became its heart and soul. Everything was supposed to arise out of sacrifice, even the universal system—the races of men—the diversities of creation. Everything was interpreted in terms of the sacrifice. This sacrificial religion too marked a transition from simple faith in the gods to an effort for higher self-realisation through purity and intellectual excellence—through knowledge of the retribution of Karma, e.g. good and evil actions.

The sacrificial religion was accompanied by a complication of the sacrificial art, and the pre-eminence of the sacrificial priests. Even in polities, the influence of the latter was immense. From simple priests they rose to be the mediators between the king and the people, and between their rulers and those of the great universal system—the *devas*.

As the centre of political activity fast shifted to the East,
The Madhyadeśa. the Madhyadeśa, for a time became the homeland of political activity and intellectual excellence. It became also the cradle of the sacrificial religion. It was in this region that a number of states with considerable territories were formed fringed by a number of outer states in the north, east, west and south. Gradually as we shall see, the East rose into prominence

These states arose mostly out of the older tribes and communities. In some cases, new states were formed by the settlement of clans and sections in the outer fringe area. But for the most part, these states arose with the re-grouping or re-arrangement of the old clans and sections. Arising partly through conquest and partly through association and assimilation, these new states were ruled, either by the old dynasties, or septs of the old ones who had proved their prowess over their kinsmen.

Of the states the following are worthy of mention :—

(a) In the central region—

- (1) Kuru—modern district of Sirhind, with capital at
Āsandivant or Hastināpura.
- (2) Pañcāla—in the region of modern Rohilkhand.
- (3) Matsya—in the region of modern Jaypur.
- (4) Uśīnara—near the Kuru Country.

In the North—

- (5) Kośala—in the region of Oudh and Fyzabad.

In the East—

- (6) Kāsi—round the sacred city of Bārāṇasī.
- (7) Videha—in modern North Eastern Behar.
- (8) Aṅga—near modern Bhagulpur.
- (9) Magadha—South Behar.

In the South—

- (10) Cedi—in modern Bundelkund.
- (11) Sātvatas (or the Yadava confederation).
- (12) Vidiarbha—near the Narmadā region

In the North-west, there were the Uttara-Kuru, Uttara-Madra, Gaudhāra, Kekaya, and a number of other states which maintained their old position and order. The Ambaṣṭhyas lay probably to the region of the Southern Indus.

The Kingdom of the Kurus—The most famous of such kingdoms was that of the Kurus which is first mentioned in the Atharva Veda, which sings the praise of Parīkṣit Kauravya. Next, in the Epic literature, we find the prominence of the Kauravas who are described as Bhāratas or Pauravas. They were Pauravas being descended from Puru the youngest son of Yayāti. They were also Bhāratas, being descended from Bharata Daushānti, who gave his name to the ruling tribe and with their growing importance, to the whole country now known as India.

According to a tradition recorded in the 94th Chapter of the

Ādi-Purāṇa, King Saṃvaraṇa of the Puru line

Rise of the Kurus. son of Rkṣi was defeated by his Pañcāla scions and had to fly to the hilly region of the Indus. With the help of Vaśistha's prayers he gained success again, retrieved his lost fortune and his son Kuru founded a royal line in the celebrated Kurukṣetra. Of his many sons, were Parīkṣit, (who had three sons viz. Kakṣisena, Ugrasena and Citrasena) and Janamejaya one of whose sons was Dhṛtarāṣṭra. The sons of Dhṛtarāṣṭra were five and in his line arose Pratipa and others. Pratipa's three sons were Devāpi, Śāntanu and Bāhlika. This brings us to the events leading to the great war. After Śāntanu, we have as is well-known, Vieitratravirya who had two sons e.g., Dhṛtarāṣṭra and Pāṇḍu, the last two giving birth to the heroes of the Bhārata war. Yudhiṣṭhīra was followed by Parīkṣit, and his successor was Janamejaya Pārikṣita.

The two dynastic lists (*i.e.* ch. 94 and 95) of the Adi vary considerably and there is wide divergence as to the order of princes or their relation to each other. But this does not prove that the names are imaginary since many of these names of the Puru or Kuru princes as recorded in the Epic, occur in Vedic literature. Thus, we have Purūravas Aila the founder of the Kuru Princes in the Lunar race (R. V., X. 95; Śat. Br. XI. 5. 1. 1.), Rigveda. Āyu (R. V. I. 53. 10, and II. 14. 7), Yajāti Nahuṣya (R. V. I. 31. 17; X. 63. 1), Pūru (R. V., VII. 8. 4; 18, 13.), Bharata Dauḥṣanti (Śat. Br. XIII. 5. 4. 11-12^v), Ajāmidha (R. V. IV. 44. 6), Rkṣa (R. V., VIII. 68. 15), Kuru, Uccaiḥśravas (J. U. Br. III. 29), Pratīpa Prātisūtvāra (A. V., XX. 129. 2), Bālhika Pratīpiya (Śat. Br. XII. 9. 3. 3.), Śāntanu (R. V., X. 98), Dhṛarāṣṭra Vaicitravīrya (Kāt. Sam. X. 6), Parīkṣita Kauravya (A. V., XX. 127-7 & 10) etc.

The paurāṇika lists however mention two Parīkṣits, one being the son of Kuru (and father of Kakṣasena, Ugrasena and Śrutasesna) while the other flourished after the great Bhārata Battle. It is difficult to indentify the Parīkṣit of the Atharva Veda with either of the Epic kings of the same name. Probably, the second Parīkṣit has more claims to be identified with the Vedic Parīkṣit.*

The Kurus, both according to Vedic and Epic evidence, were Pauravas as well as Bhāratas. They are very prominent in the Brāhmaṇa literature. This was due to the fact that in course of time, the line of Kuru became the most prominent to the exclusion of the other branches of the Pauravas who had

* For arguments as to the identification, date and the early history of the Parīkṣitas see H. C. Roy Chowdhury "Political History of India from the Accession of Parīkṣit to the Coronation of Bimbisāra. Pp. 1-7.

once dominated over the other sections. European scholars see in the Kurus (*see Oldenberg—Buddha*, pp. 409—10) a fusion of the Tṛtsus and Bharatas. But, if we believe in the Paurāṇic evidence and try to interpret the Vedic evidence in terms of the Paurāṇic, we find it clear that the Tṛtsus and Bharatas were close kinsmen of the tribe or sept which came to be known as the Kurus*.

According to the Epic (I, 109 ch.), the Kuru kingdom lay between the Dṛṣadvatī and the Gaṅgā and comprised three districts e.g., Kuru, Kuru-jāṅgala and Kurukṣetra. According to the Taittirīya Āraṇyaka tradition, it was bounded by the Khāṇḍava forest on the south, the Tūrghna on the north and the Parināh on the west. The kingdom corresponded roughly speaking, to the modern Sirhind district (V I, I. 169—70) and was watered by the rivers Dṛṣadvatī Sarasvatī, Kauśiki, Aruṇā, Apayā and also by the Paṣṭyā according to Pischel (V. I., I. 170). There was also the lake Saryanāvant, otherwise known as the Anyataḥ-plakṣa.

The Bhāratas of the Kuru line figure prominently in the Brāhmaṇa literature as the patrons of the sacred ritual, as well as great conquerors. Their greatness as the champions of orthodoxy is already hinted at in the Rig-Veda. The goddess

* Sudas himself was undoubtedly a Bhārata. In Vasiṣṭha's hymn, he is described as the *nṛpā* of Devavata, while we find in R.V. (III. 23—2), Devavaravas and Devavata described as Bharatas. The Tṛtsus and Bharatas were probably different sections of the same family. Sudas, a scion of the Pāścāla section became prominent for a time, but some time afterwards, this supremacy passed to the descendants of Kuru. From the accession to power of this rising section, the federated clans or tribes became known as the Kurus. That they were intimately connected in this way and that the different sections retained their identity to some extent is seen from the formula which was used in proclaiming the king-elect to the Bhārata people. See *Vedic Index*, II, p. 96.

Bhārati seems to have been the presiding deity of the Bharatas, who were also connected with the sacred Sarasvati.

Of the Bhārata conquerors, we find the names of many in
The Kurus in the Brāhmaṇas. the Brāhmaṇas. We find in the Śatapatha,
Brāhmaṇas. that Bharata Dauḥṣanti, performed the Āśvamedha and he was inaugurated to higher kingship by Dirghatamas Māmateya. Another, Śatānika Sātrajita was consecrated by Somaśuṣman Vājaratnāyana (See Ait. Br. VIII. 21—23, and Sat. Br. XIII. 5 4.)

While we get but little details about the early Kurus, the history of line from Parīkṣita becomes more clear. The Bhārata war round which centres the chief interest of the Epic narrative, is hardly mentioned in the later Vedic literature. But there are hints pointing to such an event and the absence of details about the war may be attributed to the fact that the war was but a struggle between two sections of the ruling race of the Kurus, one of which gained the upper hand with the help of the Pāñcālas.

Parīkṣita was followed by Janamejaya, who figures in the The Royal Line. Brāhmaṇas (Ait. Br. VII X 34 and VIII. 21, Sat. Br. XIII. 5. 4 ; XI. 5 5 13), as a great conqueror. He performed two horse-sacrifices, one with the help of the priest Indrota Daivāpi Śaunaka and another with Tura Kāvaśeya as priest. His capital was the rich city of Āsandivant probably the same as Hastināpur. He conquered Takṣasīla and tried to exterminate the Takṣas, to avenge the death of his father at their hands and this probably found itself converted in mythical language into the celebrated Snake-sacrifice.

According to a Paurāṇic and Epic tradition, he came into conflict with the Brāhmaṇas headed by Vaisampāyana. According

to the account in the Matsya-purāṇa, the king had to abdicate and his son succeeded him but according to the Vāyu Purāṇa, the king perished as the result of the curse of the Brāhmaṇas. We have the repetition of this story in many of the later works. (See Kautilya Arthaśāstra, Ch. on *Indriya-jaya* and Kāmandaka, I. commentary of Śankarārya.)

Janamejaya and his three brothers Bhimasena, Ugrasena
Successors of Parikṣit. and Śrutaseṇa, seem to have been well-known to the Brāhmaṇa writers, and we have traditions about their horse-sacrifice (Śatap. Br. XIII. 5. 4. 3 and Sāṅkhyāyana Śrauta Sūtra—XVI. 9. 7.) According to the Epic, Kakṣasena was one of his brothers. Next in succession to Janamejaya, according to the Purāṇas (Viṣṇu IV. 21.), were Śatānika, Aśvamedha, Abhisīmakr̥ṣṇa, and Nicakṣu in whose reign the capital was transferred to Kauśambi. Probably twenty-fifth in descent from this prince was Kṣemaka, with whom the line of Kauśambi Kurus ended.

All of these names recorded in the Purāṇas do not occur in the Vedic literature. On the other hand, we find some new names of Kuru princes like Abhipratārin Kākṣaseni, Vṛddhadyumna Abhipratāriṇa and his son Rathagṛtsa.

There is reason for believing that in course of time the Kuru kingdom was divided into parts. For, in addition to the Kauśambi branch, there was probably another line which continued to rule at Indraprastha, and this is testified to by Buddhist tradition which speaks of princes of the Yudhiṣṭhila gotta ruling at Indrapattha. The Kauśambi princes were also Bhāratas.

The decline of the Kurus seems to be hinted at in the later Vedic literature. The Aitareya contains the prophecy of the expulsion of the Kurus and in the Chāndogya (I. 10), we hear

of the plight of the Kuru country owing to an invasion of locusts. Again, in the Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad (Br. up. III. 1.), we find that the sophists of the day discussed the question as to "whither the Pārikṣitas were gone," and this points to the decline of the Kurus.

The kingdom of Pañcāla.—[The land of the five tribes?] It was a kingdom, which comprised a large part of modern Rohilkhand, including the districts of Badoun, and Farrakabad. The Pañcālas seem to have evolved out of the Vedic Krivis, together with the fusion of the Turvaśas (whose contingent accompanied the sacrificial horse of Śoṇa Sāstrāśāha father of Koka Sat. XIII. 5. 4. 15 & 16), some of the Srūjayas, and the Keśins. That they comprised five distinct sections, is admitted by the Purāṇas and we are further told that the line of Turvasu being ended, the Turvasus merged with the Bharatas, probably the Pañcālas. In the Epic, the Somakas and Srūjayas are associated with Drupada. They were very intimately connected with the Kurus and this is confirmed by Paurāṇika evidence. According to these, the Pañcālas were Bhāratas and Kauravas, and were descended from Haryasva a successor of Ajāmidha. According to Brāhmaṇic evidence, the association of the Kurus and the Pañcālas is more intimate and there is some hint even, as to their forming one confederation. The Aitareya Brāhmaṇa speaks of kings of the Kura-Pañcālas. Subsequently, they seem to have been dissociated from each other, but a relation of close intimacy and alliance remained. The Epic evidence shows this close relationship, though, it speaks of a Kuru attack on the Pañcālas (e.g. the attack of Drona and his Kaurava disciples and their attack on Drupada) ending in a partition of the Pañcāla kingdom. The division of the Pañcāla kingdom is

supported by the Purāṇas. The Pāñcālas play a prominent part in the present Epic version of the great war and a Pāñcāla prince led the armies opposed to that of the Kauravas. The Pāñcāla country remained the strong hold of orthodox culture and some of its princes like Pravāhana Jaivali distinguished themselves by their intellectual excellence. The Brāhmaṇa literature speaks of the excellency of the Brāhmaṇas of Pāñcāla and of conquering Pāñcāla rulers like Durmukha. (Ait. Br. VIII.).

Kingdom of Uśinara:—It lay, probably, to the north or rather north-west of the Central region. In the Aitareya Brāhmaṇa, they are found to live in the central region along with the Vaśas. In the Kauśitaki Up., they are also associated with the Kurus and the Vaśas (IV. 1), though the Gopatha Brāhmaṇa regarded them as northerners. The mention of Uśinara rulers in the Rig-veda has already been stated. According to the Purāṇic evidence, they were a branch of the Anavas, being descended from Anu. There were evidently two branches, one settling in the Punjab (identical with the Seboi of the Greeks) and the other somewhere further to the East.

The Vaśas.—They were rather an unimportant people connected with the Uśinaras. They lived in the Central region where they are located by the Aitareya Brāhmaṇa (VIII. 14.)

Kingdom of the Saleas or Śalvas.—It also lay close to the Kuru country. It is more than once mentioned in the Brāhmaṇa literature. A Salva king Yaugandhari is mentioned in the Mantrapāṭha as leading his chariots on to the banks of the Yamunā. In the Epic (Virat. I. 12), the Śalvas and Yugandhara are mentioned together on the fringe of the Kuru realm. They appear as prominent fighters on the side of Duryodhana.

Kingdom of the Śrūjayas.—The kingdom of the Śrūjayas lay to the south of the Drṣadvatī. They were very closely allied to the Kurus and as such they are mentioned in the Rig-Veda. Some of the Śrūjaya princes like Daivavāta, or Sahadeva were conquerors of the earliest period. Prastoka was another Śrūjaya king of eminence. But the importance of the Śrūjayas ended with Sāhadevya. The Brāhmaṇas speak of their close connection with the Kurus. In the Śatapatha, Devabhāga Śrautārsa was the Purohita of the Kurus and Śrūjayas. According to the same Brāhmaṇa, the people of the locality (Sat. Br. XII. 9. 3. 1.) drove out Duṣṭa-ritu Paumpāyana one of their kings from the hereditary "monarchy of ten generations," together with Revottaras Pāṭava Cakra Sthapati probably his minister.

Kingdom of the Matsyas.—As stated already, the Matsyas are mentioned in the Rig Veda. Probably, they occupied the region of Eastern Rajputana i.e., Alwar, Jaipur and Bharatpur. In the Śatapatha, Dhvasan Dvaitavana a Matsya king is mentioned as having performed Aśvamedha. (Sat. Br. XIII. 5. 4. 9.). The Matsyas played a prominent part in the great war.

Kingdom of the Śūrasenas.—It was established round the district of Mathurā. The Śūrasenas were great fighters and claimed kinship with the Yādavas. (See Pargiter. I. H. T. p. 170). They are prominently mentioned in the Epic, but very little is known about them from the Brāhmaṇa literature.

Kingdom of the Cedis.—It probably comprised the western districts of Bundelkhand. The Cedis were an old tribe mentioned as early as the Rig Vedic hymns. According to the Purāṇas, the rulers of Cedi kingdom were descended from a son of Kuru, Vasu, a prince fourth in succession from the last

named displaced the Yādavas and conquered the kingdom of Cedi. The Vāsava kings extended their influence over Magadha Karuṇa and some other kingdoms. In the days of the great war, the Cedi princes had attained prominence. Caidya Śīsupāla lost his life on the eve of Yudhiṣṭhīra's Rājasūya, as the result of a struggle with Śrīkrṣṇa the Yādava elder and a renowned champion of freedom, to whom the *arghya* had been offered.

The Sātvatas (Yādava).—To the south of the Central region, there was the Confederation of the Yādavas. From the Vedic and Brāhmaṇic evidence, the Yādavas seem to have been driven out from the north by the Bhāratas and also by the Vāsavas of the Cedi Kingdom, according to the Paurāṇic evidence. Consequently, they migrated south from their original seat Mathurā. The Aitareya Br. places them in the south and the Śatapatha Br. contains the tradition of Bharata's defeat of the Yādavas and his carrying away of their Asvamedha horses. The Sātvatas were divided into many septs and sections and some of their rulers had the title of Bhoja.

Vidarbha.—Perhaps allied to the Bhojas were the rulers of Vidarbha. The Aitareya Br. mentions a king Bhīma Vaidarbha.

THE KINGDOMS OF THE WEST:—

Kekaya.—The kingdom of Kekaya lay between the Kab river and the Beas. According to Paurāṇic evidence, the ruling house of this country belonged to the Ānava family. Kekaya king Asvapati attained celebrity as a philosopher; according to the Śatapatha Br. (X. 61. 2) and the Chānd. Up. (V. 11. 4), he was approached by a number of Brāhmaṇ scholars to have their doubts solved and he boasted of his being free from misers, drunkards, thieves or adulterers.

In the Rāmāyana, we find a King Aśvapati who was the ather in-law of Daśaratha and the maternal grand-father of Bharata. His son was Judhājit who called upon Rāma to conquer Takṣa and Puṣkala which was then in the hands of Gandharvas. According to the Rāmāyanic evidence, the capital of the Kekaya Kingdom was Rājagṛha Girivraja (II. 67 and 68).

Madra.—This kingdom was situated in the north central region of the Punjab, probably near the district of Sialkot. Very little of Madra is known through the Brāhmaṇa literature except that it was the native-land of sages like Kāpya Patañcala, teacher of Uddālaka Āruṇi (Br. up III. 7. 1). The Aitareya Brāhmaṇa speaks of the country of Uttara Madras, which was beyond the Himālayas (*Pareṇa Himavantum*).

The Madras and their king Śalya, figure prominently in the Great Epic. Śalya fought on the side of the Kauravas and was killed. In the Karṇa-parva, we find Karṇa vehemently denouncing the manners and customs of the Madra people, fond of wine, beef and onions. Their women are described as having been without any restraint and without any moral sense. The capital of the Madra kingdom was Śākala, beyond the river Satadru. According to the Brāhmaṇas, the Uttara Madras seem to have retained a non-monarchical constitution.

Gandhāra.—The kingdom of Gandhāra comprised some of the extreme north-western districts of the Punjab round Peshwar. As already mentioned, it was a wool-growing region the people of which was rather held in contempt by the men of the Central region. In the Chāndogya Up. (VI. 14), Uddālaka Āruṇi, mentions Gandhāra as an unknown region situated at a great distance. The evidence of the Śatapatha Br. (XI. 4. 1. 1) Purāṇa of the Kauśitaki Br. (VII. 6) shows that it was in those of K

days a seat of great cultural activity frequented by Brāhmaṇa students. Takṣaśilā later on became a great educational centre, as is proved by the evidence of the Jātakas and other later works. The Gandhāra country included also the great city of Puskalāvati, of which we find mention in the Rāmāyaṇa and in the fragments of Greek travellers. The Aitareya Brāhmaṇa (VII. 34) mentions a prince Nagnajit Gandhāra who learned the use of substitutes for the drinking of Soma from Babru Daivavṛiddha.

KINGDOMS OF THE EAST—

The Kingdom of Kāśī.—Kāśī became a kingdom with a considerable territory. By the time of the Upaniṣads, many of its kings had attained celebrity. According to the Śat. Br. one of the Kāśī kings Dhṛitarāṣṭra was defeated by the Bhārata Sātrājita Śatānuka. Ajātaśatru was another Kāśī king. Another Bhadrasena Ajātaśatrava was a contemporary of Uddalaka. Kāśya Jaivali was another famous king mentioned in the Brāhmaṇas and in the Upaniṣad literature. Where the Kāśis originated or how they separated is not yet clear. The Purāṇas connect the Kāśī dynasty with the Ailas, king Kaśa, the founder of the line being descended from a brother of Nahusa or Ayu. At the same time, they regard the Kāśī kings as descendants of the Aikṣikas in the female line through the daughter of Bāhu the father of Sagara. The Brāhmaṇas and the Upaniṣads mention Kāśī kings like Dhṛitarāṣṭra (a Bharata) defeated by Śatānuka Sātrājita, Ajatasatru a philosopher king engaged in disputes with opponents like Gārgya Bālāki and some of his successors like Ajātaśatrava. Of the names in the king-lists of the Purāṇas, nothing is known in the Vedic literature. In some passages we seem to have a clear reference to one Purohita

acting for the Kāśī, Kośala and Videha regions and the Baudhāyana Śranta Sūtra mentions the Kāśis and the Videhas together, while in the Gopatha Br. the Kāśis are mentioned along with the Kośalas.

Kośala—Became a separate political entity very early. The state owed its origin to an Aikṣaka settlement in the region of modern Oudh. The antiquity of the Aikṣaka rulers is apparent from the repeated mention of Aikṣaka princes even in the Rig-Vedic hymns. As we have seen, the names of Vadhryaśva, Purukutsa, and Trasadasyu all occur in the Purāṇas. Their lack of mention in the Brāhmaṇas was probably due to their separation from the region in which the religious literature of the Brāhmaṇas developed. It is only in the Rāmāyaṇa, that we find an early mention of Ayodhyā. The founders of Kośala seem to have been that branch which settled in the north-Eastern region and the Videhas are described as the descendants of Kośalas who under Māthava Videha (Sat. Br. I. 4. 1.) crossed the Sudānīrā and laid the foundation of Videha. The connection of Kośala and Videha is proved by the Rāmāyaṇic tradition of Rāma's marriage with Janaka's daughter. The connection of the Videhas and the Kāśis with the Kośalas is also repeatedly mentioned in the later Vedic literature. At least one of the Kośala kings, Para Āṭnāra Hairanyanābha is described in the Brāhmaṇas as performing the Aśvamedha. Many of the Kośala princes mentioned in the Purāṇas find place in the Vedic literature e.g.:—*Mandhatr Yanvangaśva*.—(Go. Br. I. 2. 10.), *Purukutsa*.—(See pp. 76 mentioned in the Rig-Veda), *Trasadasyu*.—(R. V., IV. 38. 1.; VII. 19, etc.), *Tryaruna*.—(R. V., V. 27. figuring as a great giver), *Triganku*.—(mentioned in the Taittirīya Up. 1. 10. 1.), *Hariscandra*.—(Aikṣaka mentioned in the Aitareya

Brāhmaṇa in connection with the story of Sunahṣepha's attempted sacrifice), *Rohita*.—son of Hariscandra.—(See Ait. Br. VII. 13.). *Bhagirathī*—(Aīṣṭaka mentioned in the Jaiminiya Up. Brāhmaṇa IV. 6. 1. 2), *Ambarīṣa*.—(mentioned in the Rig-Veda I. 100. 17), *Rūparūpa*—(Baudhāyana Śr. Sūtra XX. 12.) *Hiranyānabha Kauśalya*—(mentioned in Praśna Up. VI. 1 and Śāṅ. Śr. Sū. XVI. 9. 13), and *Para Āñnara Hairanyakandabha* (mentioned in the Śatapatha Br. XIII. 5. 4. 4.)—See H. C. Roy-Chowdhury, p. 50.

The Kingdom of Videha—Viḍeḥa was a kingdom to the east of Kośala and on the other side of the Sadānirā. It corresponded to modern Trīput. The Videhas are closely associated with the Kośalas and occasionally with the Kāsīs. Their culture was derived from the Brahmins of the West and subsequent to that of Kośala. The Śat Br. attributes the establishment of the kingdom to Videgha Māṭhava. The three seem to have been very closely associated as would appear from the Sāṅkhāyana Śrauta Sūtra passage which speaks of one Jala Jāṭukarṇya as being the priest of the three. The ruling tribe in Videha who probably gained their name from the local people, were Aikṣakas of Kośala. The Purāṇas make them the descendants of Nimi son of Ikṣaku and the same account speaking of a sacrifice lasting for a thousand years, clearly hints at the late settlement of the Videhas. The name Nimi probably occurs in the Pañcavīṣṭa Br. which mentions Nami Sāpya a Videha king. Later on, we hear of the fame of the rulers bearing the title of Janaka under whom Videha became a great centre of culture.

The Kingdom of Āṅga—Āṅga also became a kingdom. In the Aitareya list of conquerors, Āṅga Vairocana is prominently mentioned. (Ait. VIII. 35).

Politics and Ritualism

WHEN we pass on from the history of these states to a consideration of the evolution of political life described in the Brāhmaṇas, the first thing that meets our eyes is the commixture of religion and politics. Social complexities had changed the mentality and ideals of the people and while a desire for an orderly and regulated life dominated the minds of men, they became more and more alive to the ever-presence of agencies which though beyond the control of men, influenced their lives deeply.

As the primitive mind is alway swayed by fear, it invokes the blessing of the gods and tries to appease their anger. Gradually, formalities and practices are introduced to safeguard divine sanction for all acts and with it is evolved a code of ritual, which not only confines itself to the acts of the individual but embraces the actions of the community as a whole. Such a commixture of politics and religion is almost universal, and everywhere it marks the transition from primitive ideas of cosmology to a rational explanation of the relation of the forces and factors regulating the phenomenal world. India was not an exception to the general rule. Here, too, every act of social life was dominated by such beliefs and ideas. Politics came to be influenced by this ritual and the significance of political acts and functions changed. They came to be interpreted in terms of the ideas relating to the cosmical world and politics was dominated by ritualism.

Religion and ritualism overshadowed everything. The maze of ritual comprised diverse elements. It included rites for the propitiation of the gods, for securing to the governing authority a moral sanction and for regulating the relation between the upholder of law and order and his subjects. Political integration came through the channel of religion and ritualistic observances. As the universe was an organic whole, so in its imitation different duties and functions were attached to the various elements of the body-politic. Simultaneously, the relations between the gods, the king, the priest-hood and the classes of the population were defined and all these were welded together and their correlation defined. It is difficult to separate the line of political evolution from amidst much that is too indefinite for generalisation unless we study the religious aspect of polities, and when that is done, it will be possible to find out the leading features of the type of evolution which characterised the development of that age.

As the result of these influences, the aim and object of political life changed. Every social and political act came to have a close connection with the cosmica higher forces and factors. All authority was supposed to flow from the divine guardians of the universe. The king as the upholder of order was regarded as the counterpart of the gods and as his authority and functions partook of the nature of the former, a moral sanction for the acts and activities of the king was required. The purely human aspect of life was thus masked by other factors. The king's authority thus no longer depended on the people, but it was made to depend on the sanction of the higher universal rulers whom he represented. Charms and sympathetic magic were introduced. Symbols and symbolic observances were made part and parcel of ceremonies. New

meanings and interpretations were added. The aspect of political life was entirely changed. The conflict of classes passed away. The social out-look broadened and the germs of constitutionalism, with defined rights and duties for the various elements in the body-politic, came into being. The work was achieved through the agency of religion and ritual.

The installation or exercise of regal authority came to be associated with sacrifices and ceremonial. The king's accession was no longer complete with his choice by the elders, his proclamation and his acceptance by the whole people accompanied with the older and simpler ceremonial. But, to become a lawful ruler he required the full support of the gods and there arose elaborate ceremonies of inauguration, which not only conferred the sanction of the gods but the acceptance of the people. Of these, the earliest and simplest was the Abhiṣeka ceremony of which we have a description in the Taittiriya-Brāhmaṇa (II. 7. 15. & 16.). This work, according to Prof. Macdonnell, is older than the Aitareya, though Prof. Berriedale Keith holds with reason, the opposite view.

THE ABHISEKA CEREMONY—was the simplest of all inaugural performances. It began with a *homa* with seven mantras. The king was first of all supposed to be re-born as the son of the sacrificial priests (ऋषीणां पुनो अभिषेक्तिपा चर्य) and this fiction vested him with a sanctity which made his person inviolable to the people. Next, there were innumerable prayers for granting him an extensive kingdom and an efficient administration (सावौहि देव प्रसवाय पित्रे । वर्धाणमस्मे वरिमाणमस्मै । चदाम्भस्यं सवितः सवंताता । दिवे दिव आसुवा मूरिपस्मः). After this, the king was asked to be the guide of men and called upon to give an understanding to protect the good and punish the wicked (म राजा राज्यमनुमन्यता-

मिदम्.) Then there were prayers for the prosperity of cattle, the various castes of men and for Prajāpati's blessings on him (आयं भातु गवसा पच्च कटोः । इन्द्र इव ज्येष्ठो मवतु प्रजावान्, etc.)

Then, the king was made to sit on a tiger-skin and Rig-Vedic hymns for the loyalty of subjects and the vesting of all spiritual powers were chanted. The king ascended a chariot and uttered the prayer that his kingdom might not hear the sound of enemy bows and that success might attend him always. (परि मा सेव्या धीषाः । ज्ञानां हृष्टन्तु रथध्रवः । मेधिषाः पितृमाना इह । मां गोपतिमभिर्विश्वन्तु ॥) He was next smeared over with unguents and embraced by friends, relations and Brāhmaṇas. Then, he was addressed by the Purohita as follows :—उदसवितु मूर्यः । उदिदं मासकं वचः । उदित्ति देव मूर्यः । सज्ज वग्नुना मम । अहं वाचो विवाचनम् । मयि वाग्मतु धर्मसिः । यन्तु नदयो वर्षन्तु पर्जन्याः । सुपिष्ठां शीघ्रधयो भवन्तु । अत्रष्टामोदनव तामामिच्छताम् । एषां राजा भूयासम् ॥

[“May the king be lustrous like the noon-day sun ;..... may he the noon-day sun attain prosperity ;...may the rivers be full, clouds rain in time, crops fructify ; may the king be the lord of a rich country flowing with milk and honey,”]

In the hymns uttered, the use of the words *prajāvan* and *pitre* is worthy of special note since it points to the growing idea of paternal duties being vested in the monarch.⁹

THE RAJASUYA.—Other inaugural ceremonies for conferring higher sovereign authority existed and these were performed on specified occasions. We take the Rājasūya first, reserved for

⁹ For details, see Tait. Br. II. 7. 15-17. and also Gohstücker's Sanskrit-English Dictionary, Vol. I. p. 277. A summary of the details is to be found in Dr. N. Law's "Hindu Polity," chap. IX. on Religious Aspects, pp. 193-196.

great kings only. It was a complicated ceremony consisting of a long succession of ritualistic performances which covered a period of more than two years.

The succession of performances in it is described in the Vājasaneyī Sambhīta, the Aitareya Brāhmaṇa, the Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa, and the Śrauta Sūtras of Kātyāyana and Āśvalāyana.

It included seven distinct sacrifices e.g.—

- (1) the opening *Agnisṭoma* which covered five days. In course of this, the Dikṣā transformed the king into an embryo out of which a deity was to be born and a covenant was made between the king and the priests to avoid dissensions.
- (2) the *Abhiprācanyā* or consecration in which the principal elements were, the collection of seventeen kinds of liquids, Pārtha oblations, the formal proclamation of the king, the conquest, the anointment, the cow-raid, vesting of immunity and the handing over of the sacrificial sword.
- (3) the *Daśapeya* or the ceremony of drinking the Soma cup. This was succeeded after a year's interval by
- (4) the *Kesharapantya* or hair cutting attended with an
- (5) *Atirātra* sacrifice.
- (6) the *Vyuspi.-dvirātra*, succeeded by
- (7) the *Kṣatradhṛti* or the wielding of the royal power.

This complicated ceremony was thus a compound of religious rites with social and political functions. The chief object

of these was to appease the gods, to have their blessings, to ward off evil and to give a moral sanction to the exercise of royal authority which was consubstantiated with the functions of the gods.

In course of this maze of ceremonial we find details about the growing political machinery and the prevailing political ideas. Thus, the *Ratnakarīṣṇī* or "offerings to the jewels" reveal to us the early constitution of the king's council.—

The jewels were according to the *Satapatha Br.* and other authorities :—

(1) The Commander of the army	... सेनानी
(2) The Pontiff-adviser	... पुरोहित
(3) The King	... राजन् himself.
(4) { The Queen The Discarded Queen	} ... महिषी
(5) The Messenger	... सूत
(6) The Grāma-leaders	... ग्रामणी
(7) The Chamberlain	... चन्त्र
(8) The Charioteer	... संयुक्त
(9) The Carver or collector	... भागदुव्
(10) The Dice-keeper	... अच्छावाप
(11) The Keeper of games and forests	गोविकर्त्ता
(12) The Courier*	पालामल

* Authorities differ as to the names of the jewels. In the Taitt. Br., Go-nikarīṣṇī and Pāñgala are omitted and the Rājanya is included. In the Māitrā. Sāṃ., we find the Vaidya grāmīṇī and the Takṣa-Rathakāraṇī. In the Kāthaka, there is some change. According to the *Satapatha Br.*, the king worshipped at the house of other queens whether discarded or belonging to lower castes e.g. the Vāśīḍā (the favorite), the Parivṛkti (discarded) and in the Aśvamedha, the Pāñgall took part.

The most important political function was the "Consolidation" of sovereignty which was vested in the king-elect. This, together with other allied ceremonies formed part of the Abhishecaniya. In connection with all these, too, we find a curious blending of ritual and state-functions. The ceremony which requires detailed description began with the offering of victims to Agni and Soma, and then further offerings were made to—(i). Savitṛ Satyaprasava. (ii). Agni Gṛhaspati. (iii). Soma Vanaspati. (iv). Br̥haspati Vākpati. (v). Rudra Paśupati. (vi). Mitra Satya (vii). Varuṇa Dharmapati.

After these offerings, the priest took hold of the king and uttered the formula "may Savitṛ quicken thee for ruling, Agni for house-holders, Soma for trees, Br̥haspati for speech, Indra for lordship, Rudra for cattle, Mitra for truth and Varuṇa for the Lord of the Law."

The priest further uttered a sacred formula praying, "quicken him oh gods! to be unrivalled so as to be without an enemy, for chief-dom, for great lordship, for man-rule, for ruling over men, for Indra's energy,—him, the son of such and such man, the son of such and such woman, whatever be his parentage—of the people whose king he is." e.g.

इमं देवा असपत्रं सुवध्वं महते चत्राय महते जैगठाय महते जानराज्याय
इदं स्त्रेन्द्रियाय इमसमुच्चपुत्रसंस्थेपुत्रस्यै विश एष बोध्मो राजा सोमोऽक्षाक
ब्राह्मणानां राजा ।

The king was next sprinkled over with liquids of seventeen kinds, beginning with the water of Sarasvati Sprinkling. and each time the formula was uttered "Bestowers of kingship bestow kingship on N. N." After this, Pārtha oblations were offered, probably investing the king

with the position and authority of Pṛthī Vainya the *Herōs Eponymos* who was the "first consecrated among men."

Then the king was sprinkled over by men after he had put on the consecrated garments. The sprinklers included a Brahmin, a Rājanya kinsman, a friendly king, and a Vaīśya who were clearly representatives of his subjects agreeing to his authority.

He then put on the royal silken robes. He was thereupon proclaimed and his vow of faithfulness (*Satya-sava, Satya-dharma*) was recorded. He was made to ascend the different regions *viz.* east, west, north south and then stepped on a tiger skin, on which was placed a piece of lead representing *Namuci's head*.

This was followed by the ceremony of Anointing with sacred formulæ, the process of anointing being supposed to confer Indra's vigour, glow of Agni, Sūrya's splendour, and Indra's energy. The king then became the chief of chiefs and the king of kings.

After this he stepped three paces, symbolic of Viṣṇu's three steps (e.g. *Vikrāmaya, Vikrānta* and *Krānta*).
Final acts of the coronation ceremony described. Thus having ascended the world, he became high over everything, and everything was below him. The priest then definitely reminded him of his functions and duties.—

e.g. इयं ते राट् । यन्तासि यमनो भ्रुवोऽसि धरणः ।

क्षमै त्वा चेमाय त्वा रक्षै त्वा पोषाय त्वा ।

Then followed other rites symbolically representing older methods of attaining supremacy. One of these was the mimic cow-raid in which the king was allowed to take away a herd of kine from the house of a friend. Next came the game of dice in which the king's victory showed his wisdom.

At the same time the king was made *Adanya*. The Adhvaryu
struck him on the back and "thus guided him
Made adanya safely over judicial punishment (*Daṇḍa-vadha*)
and thence the king became free from judicial punishment.

Next, the king addressed the Brahmin priest and described
him as savitṛ of true impulsion, Indra of true power, Varuṇa of
true power, Indra mighty through the people, Rudra the most
kindly.

Last of all, the wooden sacrificial sword was passed round ;
the Brahmin priest handed it over to the king ; he passed
it over to his brother who, in his turn, handed it over to the
Sūta ; from him it passed to the Sajāta and the Grāmanī and the
sword ultimately came back to the king. The king received the
homage of all who including Brāhmaṇas sat below.

THE VĀJAPEYA—Another sacrifice of importance was
the *Vajapeya*. About its performance there are differences of
opinion. According to the Kātyāyana Śrauta Sūtra, it was
performed by a Samrāj, a prince of higher position than an
ordinary king, while according to other authorities, it could be
performed by any one.

In addition to the usual oblations and ceremonial per-
formances, the chief distinguishing feature was the Chariot
race in which the sacrificer, who belonged either to the
priestly or the royal order, was allowed to carry off the palm.
(Sat. Br. V. I. 5.). Then, after a long interval, the sacrificer
ascended the top of the sacrificial post, while those assembled
there, threw bags of salt at him. He then descended from it
and trod upon a piece of gold placed on a goat skin and next
sat upon a throne-seat. Another important rite was the
fictitious Dice-play in which the king-elect was made to gain the

victory. We shall discuss the importance of all these later on. After further offerings the priest conferred upon him the superior ruler-ship of Bṛhaspati.

THE AINDRA-MAHĀBHİŞEKA.—Next, we have the

The Aindra-Mahā-*Aindra-Mahābhīṣeka* detailed in the Aitareya bhīṣeka. Brāhmaṇa, which mentions first of all the Puṇarābhīṣeka or the repetition of the Inauguration Ceremony. After describing this, it gives us the details and the importance of the Aindra-Mahābhīṣeka which was supposed to have originated in reminiscence of the election of Indra by the gods as their king in course of the struggle of the Devas against the Asuras (VIII. 12-14). The consequence of this Mahābhīṣeka was that it conferred on the king all the various types of sovereignty e.g. *Rājya*, *Sāmrājya*, *Mahārājya*, *Vairājya*, *Aikarājya* and ending with the the *Sārbabhaumya* which conferred the highest type of Imperial authority over the whole region extending from the hills to the sea (धासमुद्रम् एकराट्). As in the case of the Rājasūya and the Vājapeya, this Mahābhīṣeka comprised a complicated ritual. But by far the most important ceremony of the whole was the oath which the priest administered to the prince. The king was made to take the oath "whatever

The Oath pious works I might have done during the time which elapses from the day of my birth to the day of my death, all these together with my life, and my children, you would wrest from me, should I do you any harm."

[e.g. याच्च रावोमजायेऽ याच्च प्रेताच्चित तदुमयमन्तरेणेष्टापूर्वः' मे लोकं सुकृतमायुः प्रज्ञी हस्तीयाः यदि ते दुष्कृत्यम्]

The importance of the ceremony as also of the oath will be discussed in their proper place. But incidentally, it may be

mentioned that the Aitareya tradition credited a number of princes (mentioned along with their priests) with the performance of this ceremony.

THE ASVAMEDHA.—Next, we have the Asva-medha which originated in the earliest period and came to be regarded later on as the greatest of all sacrifices. What was its original significance and purpose we do not know at present. But, this is quite clear that the ceremony of Asvamedha was very old, and was performed by ancient suzerain monarchs (राजा सावभौमोऽस्वमेधेन यजेत्). Its chief interest centred round the sacrificial horse which was made to traverse the whole neighbouring region and after its return slaughtered with ceremony. It began, according to the Yajurveda, with the investing of the sacrificer with the golden ornaments (Bk. XXII). The horse was then guarded and sprinkled over, followed by other symbolical rites. Some animal-offerings were then made to several deities including Savitṛ and Agni. The horse was eulogised and its protection invoked by whispering mantras in its ears. The king prayed for the prosperity of his kingdom and the community. After the

Its early origin. performance of these initial ceremonies, the horse was allowed to roam. During the year of its sojourn abroad, ceremonies were performed every day. In the eleventh month after the return of the horse, it was bathed and harnessed. A stable of Asvattha wood was constructed and there it was fed on with barley. After the performance of all other requisite ceremonies, the horse was bedecked with jewels, and after some further rites slaughtered. After this, the dead body was circumambulated by the wife of the Yajamāna. After some more rites and

utterances of *mantras* the chief Queen was made to lie with the body with the object of facilitating the birth of a virtuous and vigorous son. Some obscene rites followed or intervened, which we may not describe in detail.

The horse sacrifice is described in detail in the *Vāj. Sam.*
Its later significance (XXII. to XXIV), in the *Satapatha* and in political history. in the *Taitt. Br.* (III. 8). Whatever might have been its original significance, it came to have an importance later on in the politics of the Brāhmaṇa and the post-Brāhmaṇa period. The horse in the Epic literature, became the symbol of a conquering king's sovereign authority, and in course of its roaming a man who held the horse was regarded as an enemy contesting his authority. This led to a war in which if victorious, the obstructor of the horse gained the position enjoyed by the conqueror who had let loose the horse. If, on the other hand, the conqueror proved victorious his supremacy remained unquestioned.

Of the various rites, the ceremony of sprinkling the horse requires examination. According to the *Taitt. Br.* (III. 8), the horse was sprinkled over in the West by the Adhvaryu accompanied by a hundred princes; by the Brahman standing to the North and accompanied by hundred Kṣatriyas; by the Hotṛ standing on the East (facing west) and accompanied by hundred "Leaders of villages," and by the Udgāṭṛ standing on the South and accompanied by hundred men of mixed castes. After a ceremonial bath and uttering of mantras, the horse was delivered to the care of a hundred princes clad in armour. Four hundred Chiefs were also made its guardians along with hundred Kṣatriyas on cars, accompanied by as many Śūdras and Vaiśyas.

The Asvamedha was performed by great princes like Bharata, Durmukha and Atyarāti. Many repeatedly performed it, Bharata being credited with the performance of 133. horse-sacrifices.

A study of the above details clearly shows how sacerdotalism was making a bid for the establishment of an orderly sovereign authority, closely modelled on that which prevailed in the universal system. As the *Devas* were the universal rulers, and as the king was (transformed into) their mundane counterpart with similar rights and responsibilites vested in him, the co-operation of these powers was sure to bring all-sided prosperity to men. Sacrifice brought such a desired harmony, between the divine and human elements with the result that not only peace and order was maintained, but the forces and resources of nature came to the assistance of men. A faith in the ideal of happiness resulting from this co-operation is apparent from the king's prayers in the Rājasūya and the Asvamedha. We quote one hymn connected with the latter (Vāj. Samp. XXII. 22).

"Oh ! Brāhmaṇ ! let there be born in the kingdom the Brāhmaṇa illustrious for religious knowledge; let there be born the Rājanya heroic skilled archer, piercing with shafts mighty warior ; the cow giving abundant milk ; the ox good at carrying ; the swift courser ; the industrious woman. May Parjanya send rain according to our desire. May our fruit bearing plants ripen. May acquisition and preservation of property be secured to us."

था ब्राह्मन् ब्राह्मणो ब्राह्मवर्चसी जायतामारादे राजम्भः शूर इष्वान्तिवाधी
महारथो जायताम् दीभूतौ धेनुर्वीदानडानाशः सप्तः पुरम्भूयीवाजिष्ठारथिष्ठाः
चमेयो मुवास्य यजमानस्य वीरो जायताम् निकामि निकामि नः पञ्जन्मो वर्षतु
फलवत्सो न चोपधयः पञ्चन्तां योगदेशो नः कस्यताम् ।

III

Political Evolution Constitutionalism

WHILE ritualism masked the social outlook, momentous changes influenced politics. Monarchy came to be established on a firm footing and the king came to enjoy a constitutional position, by virtue of well-defined functions and duties formally vested in him, rather than subsisting on the mere personal relation between him and his subjects, which was liable to disruption with the rise of strong rivals near him. Various causes and circumstances helped the elimination of the claims of rivals and kinsmen and it is easy to find a decided tendency towards the acceptance of the sole authority of the king together with the establishment of rules of hereditary succession. The religious literature gives us instances of such. For, in the Pañca Br. in connection with *Dvīrātra* ceremony, we are told that with the performance of this ritual by the Kāpeyas, the king of the Caitrarathi family became the sole ruler to the exclusion of his kinsmen (Pañca Br. XX. 12. 5. e.g. एतेन वै चित्ररथं कापेया अयाजयं स्तम्भेकाकिनमन्नाद्यस्याद्यचमकुद्देन् । तस्माच्चित्ररथीनामेकः च चपतिर्जायते नुलम्ब इव हितौयः). Lack of evidence stands in the way of our multiplying such instances, but the tendency is clear and unmistakable and we find ample confirmation from the ritual connected with royal inauguration which conferred sole ruling authority to the king.

The strengthening of royal authority was due to various other causes and circumstances. First of all, an aristocracy of blood and service grew up and supported the king's interest. All authority came to centre in the royal person and the old king-electors themselves, became dependents on royal will. Instead of Rājakṛts or Rājakartārāḥ, they came to be termed Ratnīnāḥ or jewels round the throne. Some of them came to be distinguished by the name of Rajavīras (king's fighters or supporters) and figure prominently in the ritualistic performances associated with the Rājasūya or the Rāq-yagñā. We have described these in detail in connection with the Coronation ceremonial, but here we may repeat that the *Ratnīnāḥ* included some of the early officials in the royal entourage, while the Rajavīras comprised the king's brother, his sons, the Purohita, and the Queen, in addition to the Sūta, the Grāmanī, Kṣattī, and the Samgrābitī. (see Pañca Br. XIX. 1. 4. पर्णी वै बौरा राष्ट्रं सम्यच्छन्ति, राजभूता च राजपुत्रय पुरोहितव महिषी च सूतव चामणीच चत्ता च संयहीता चेति बौरा राष्ट्रं सम्यच्छन्ति ।) Not to mention the Rajavīras, there also grew up an influential nobility who came to be known as the Rāja-mātras. They are mentioned in the Kauśitaki Br. (XXII. 6) and in the Sāṅkhayana Śrauta Sūtra (XVII. 5. 3. 4.), but no details are known. We find also repeated mention of the Rājanya-vandhus or those to whom villages were granted.

Secondly, the king's position was strengthened by the alliance with the priestly bodies, whose importance we shall discuss later on. As there was a preponderance of ritual, (which characterises a period of transition from tribalism to a higher type of regal authority) kings came to lean on the support of the priest-hood, since belief in the aid of the gods exercised an influence on the minds of men.

This introduced fundamental changes in political ideals and also modified the angle of vision so far as it related to political concepts. The chief ideal both in society and in politics was a regulated social existence, with well-defined duties and functions on the model of the universal system. Through the agency of ritual, the favour of the gods was assured to the king and as such, an amount of sanctity attached to his duties and functions. In lieu of this divine aid, the king was compelled to keep his pretensions within bound and to acknowledge subservience to the ministers of religion. The result of this mutual *rapprochement* was that, while the promise of divine aid ensured the loyalty of the people by clothing the royal person with a vestment of sanctity, the king in his turn was compelled to depend on the principles inculcated by the priest-hood and his irresponsibility was checked.

Monarchy came to be glorified. It was clothed with a higher moral sanction and became not only regal but sacerdotal. In the eyes of his subjects, the king's functions and duties partook of the nature of those vested in the divine rulers. As such, not only did he protect life and property, but performed sacrifices to win divine favour for his people. The *Rāṣṭrabṛhmaṇi* oblations clearly point to this spiritual function of the king and some passages speak of the king's protection of the *Rāṣṭra* by means of *Brahmacarya* and *Tapas*. (ब्रह्मचर्येण तपसा राजा राइँ वै रक्षति, A. V., XI. V. 17).*

* According to the Brahmanical theory, *Satya* and *Rta* as well as *Tapas* on the part of the Creator, caused the evolution of the universal system. Indra won his position and the gods their immortality by *Tapas* (R. V., X. 173 ; Taitt. Br. III. 12. 3. 1 ; Sat. Br. XI. 5. 8. 1 ; XII. 3. 4. 1.).

Furthermore, the king came to be regarded as the protector of Dharma and of the Brāhmaṇas as would appear from the formula uttered by the Rajākartaṛāḥ in proclaiming a newly consecrated king (e.g. “राजकर्तारो व्रः……चत्रियोऽजनि विश्वस्यभूत-स्याधिष्ठिरजनि…विश्वामत्ताजनि चमित्राणा इन्द्राऽजनि ब्राह्मणानो गोपाऽजनि घर्मस्य गोपाऽजनि etc. Ait. Br. VIII. 17).

THE PRIEST-HOOD.—While royalty was thus glorified and regal authority deified through priestly support, this brought the latter to the fore-front. The representative of the sacerdotal order, the Purohita came to the front rank of state-functionaries and Brāhmaṇas as a class came to be regarded with veneration and styled as mundane gods. (See Satapatha II. 2. 2. 6, इया वै देवा देवा: अहैव देयः अय वै ब्राह्मणाः……मनुष्यदेवास्तेषां वैधा...मनुष्यदेवानां ब्राह्मणानां etc.). This was due to their close connection with the ceremonial which brought moral sanction to royal authority and gave the anointed prince a sacred character. We have already alluded to the fiction of the king's becoming the son of the sacrificial priest and this shows the importance of the priest-hood.

THE PUROHITA.—The Purohita stood out fore-most and was regarded as the *alter ego* of the king. If the king was the counter-part of Indra and Varuṇa, he was the incarnation of Bṛhaspati and performed the Bṛhaspati-sava (Taitt. Br. II. 7. 1 स एष हृष्ट्यतिसवो हृष्ट्यतिरकामयत देवानां पुरोधां गच्छेयमिति । स एतेनाजयत स देवानां पुरोधामगच्छत् ॥). He was regarded as half of the king and his blessings brought victory in war. He appeased the gods and without him they did not accept food offered by a king (न ह वा अपुरोद्धितस्य राजो देवा अत्र मदक्षित तस्माद्यच्चमानो राजा ब्राह्मणं पुरोद्धीत ॥) At the intercession of the Purohita, the gods protected the kingdom (Ait. Br. VIII. 26 [तस्मै विश्व...तदाहु ब्रह्मणे राजा तमवक्षि देवा etc.]).

So a king was to consecrate a Purohita and this man was to be looked upon as the protector of the kingdom (Rāṣṭragopa) who conferred energy, granted success and made the people loyal and prosperous. (यस्यैवं विहान् ब्राह्मणो राष्ट्रगोपः पुरोहितः चक्रण चक्रं जयति वलमश्चते यस्यैवं विहान् ब्राह्मणो राष्ट्रगोपः पुरोहितस्तस्यैवं विशः संजानते संसुखा एकमनसो यस्यैवं ब्राह्मणो विहान् राष्ट्रगोपः पुरोहितः। Ait. Br. VIII. 25).

The Purohita was thus not a mere priest. He represented moral authority and was an adviser on important affairs of state. He seems to have accompanied the king in battle on his chariot and it was he who on behalf of the common people administered the oath, both in the ordinary Coronation and in the Aindra-Mahābhiseka. As such, he was honoured by the king who accepted him as a superior and washed his feet in submission to his authority.

Privileges were conferred on him as well as on the Brāhmaṇas. His life was sacred, like the Tribunes in Rome. Transgression meant death or deposition to kings. As champion of the moral principle, he exercised co-ordinate authority with the king and he together with the Brāhmaṇas claimed absolution from regal authority which embraced everything else in this world. This would appear from the formula uttered by the Brāhmaṇas at the end of royal consecration that the king was lord of everything but in the ease of the Brāhmaṇas their king was the divine Soma (...सोमोऽस्माकं ब्राह्मणानं राजा ॥)

It was in the central region—the land of the Kurus and the Pañcālas, that this type of monarchy was gradually evolved. It was there that authority was regarded as being divine or moral rather than merely political. The tendency to irresponsibility was fully checked first, by the priests who exercised great influence.

Then, there remained the popular bodies who always asserted their rights carefully safe-guarded in the coronation ritual in which the priest exacted the oath. The king thus became a constitutional monarch only exercising authority limited by the law.

We have ample evidence pointing to the limited character of monarchy of this region. Thus, according to the evidence of the Brāhmaṇas, the great Parīkṣita suffered owing to his high-handedness towards the Brāhmaṇas and if we believe in the Epic tradition, this cost him his throne and probably his life. The Brāhmaṇas contain the tradition of the deposition of another prince—the Śrājaya Dusṭarītu Paumśīyana who was expelled from his ancestral (dūṣa-puruṣika) domains along with his adviser Revottama Pāṭava Cākrasthapati. Instances of such depositions are multiplied in the Epics. The Mahābhārata speaks of the deposition of a king of Kośala by his subjects while in the case of the Kurus, we hear of the constant interference of the people not only in matters of succession, but in all important affairs of state. Any violation of the king's duties to his subjects, made him fear popular risings ending in expulsion from the kingdom. In the next section, instances from the Epic will be multiplied with a view to show the popular character of the Kuru monarchy. Probably owing to this, the Kuru country was regarded as the home of constitutional rule and *Kuru-dharma* had a halo of sanctity round it.

Inspite of this universal tendency towards the consolidation of constitutional authority, the evolution of the political life in other regions was not the same. In the East, a greater amount of authority was vested in monarchs, with whom were developed the ideals of Paternal monarchy and of Imperial rule. The kings of Mithilā came to regard themselves as the fathers of their subjects

and took the significant title of Janaka (from *Jana* to give birth to; *Janaka*—a father). The Brāhmaṇas speak of the Samrāṭs or Emperors of the East.

The diversities of political evolution in the different regions of India find echo in one section of the Aitareya Brāhmaṇa (VIII. 14). In that section we have an account of the elevation of Indra to the position of the highest Over-lord by the gods and incidentally a mention of the various styles and dignities which were conferred on the king of the Devas as well as on all human performers of the Aindra-Mahābhiseka. We are told that :—

“एतस्यां प्राच्यां दिशि ये केच प्राच्यानां राजानः साभाज्यायैव तेऽभिषिच्यन्ते खम्बाड् इत्येनानभिपिक्तानाचक्षते ।दक्षिणस्यां दिशि ये के च सत्वतां राजानः भौज्यायैव तेऽभिषिच्यन्ते—भोजेत्येनानभिपिक्तानाचक्षते ।.....प्रतीच्यां दिशि ये के च नौचानां राजानो येऽपाच्यानां स्वाराज्यायैव तेऽभिषिच्यन्ते....स्वराडित्येनान भिपिक्तानाचक्षते.....उदौच्यां दिशि ये के च परेण हिमवन्तं जनपदा उत्तर कुरव उत्तरमद्रा इर्ति वैराज्याय तेऽभिषिच्यन्ते...अस्यां भुवार्या मध्यमायां प्रतिष्ठायां दिशि ये के च कुरुपञ्चालानां राजानः सवशोशीनरानां राज्यायैव तेऽभिषिच्यन्ते ” ॥

The meaning of this passage is clear though in regard to the technical terms denoting various types of sovereign authority, we find hardly any explanation excepting those furnished by the commentators who flourished at least two thousand years later. Its evidence may be summed up as follows :—

That in those days, (limited) king-ship flourished in the Central region *i.e.* the land of the Kurus, Pañcālas, Vaśas and Uśinaras. In the Eastern region, Princes arrogated to themselves the dignity of Samrāṭ or a superior ruler. In the South, the rulers of the Satvatas called themselves *Bhojas* or Enjoyer-Protectors, while in the West, the chiefs and rulers styled themselves *Srardāt*. Lastly, in the extreme Northern regions

beyond the mountains, the people (*Janapadāḥ*) consecrated themselves into *Vairājya* sovereignty.

In regard to the last passage, the significance of the substitution of Janapada for *Rājānah* attracted the attention of the late Dr. Martin Haug who found in it a clear reference to a kingless form of government. In regard to *Vairājya*, he pointed out that "two meanings can be given e.g. (1) without king (2) a very distinguished king. In this passage we must take it in the first meaning, for, here are *Janapadāḥ* i.e. the people in opposition to the king mentioned as *abhiṣikta*, i.e. inaugurated, while in all other passages of this chapter we find instead of them the *rājānah* or kings."⁶

This interpretation of *Vairājya* is significant in as much as it shows that republican states existed in the extreme northern fringe. We have however no clear details until we come to Pāṇini or literature subsequent to him. From the evidence of the Aitareya passage as well as that of similar ones in the Brāhmaṇic ritualistic literature, we hear of the following types of sovereign authority.

Svārājya—It probably meant the dignity of a *Svarāṭ*. A prince was a *Svarāṭ*, when he depended on nobody else. He was self-continent or an autocrat, so far as his governing authority was concerned. (स्वेनेव राजते—*sole-ruler*). This form of government prevailed among the Apāchyas and Nīcyas where

* The meaning of *Virāṭ* will remain doubtful, the use of the prefix *vi-* may be due to two senses. It may mean an absence of regal authority or it may connote a higher type of sovereign authority. Indeed, in many later works *Virāṭ* appears as the term of honour applied to great kings. Śrīkr̥ṣṇa is called a *Virāṭ*, *Samrāṭ* and *Svarāṭ*. It may not be impossible that *Virāṭ* was originally the title of elected chiefs, but later on, the meaning underwent a change. Like the words *Cæsar* or *Imperator* (which titles were assumed by later kings) it also came to designate a powerful king.

oligarchic principles long survived. A Svarāṭ ruler was the first among equals and the evidence of the Taitt. Br., confirms it. (य एवं विद्वान् वाजपेयेन यजते । गच्छति स्वाराज्यं । अर्चं समानानां पर्येति । तिष्ठन्ते इस्मै ज्ञाप्ताय. Tait. Br. 1. 3. 2. 2.)

Sāmrājya—Sāmrājya was a higher type of ruling authority. A prince became Samrāṭ if he was fully obeyed by all princes and people within his territorial jurisdiction. Sāmrājya later on came to signify an imperial overlordship especially in the East and the Mahābhārata evidence points to the highest sovereign authority being vested in such Lord Suzerains.

Bhaujya—It signified the dignity of a Bhoja or a ruler (enjoyer,—from an ancient root *Bhuj* originally meaning enjoyment, but later on coming to signify ruling authority) or Protector. Probably the Bhojas of early times were the baronial aristocracy of the South who had established themselves over a subject population from whom they collected taxes and tributes. This interpretation receives confirmation from later evidence. The Yādava princes assumed this title and one of the branches of the Yādavas was known as the Bhojas. Later evidence shows the existence of the Bhojas in the locality of Kathiwar-Guzerat in the third cen. B.C.

II. SOVEREIGNTY.—Next to the consolidation of royal power, ideas about the nature of the sovereign authority became more definite. From the primary war-lord and collector of *vali* or tribute, the king came to be regarded as a sovereign ruling over his people, the lord of the territory in which the people lived, of the material resources of the locality, the sole judge wielding the rod of punishment and the protector of Dharma.

(a) The idea of territorial sovereignty became prominent. It was the result of the final settling down of the tribes, and

the giving up of their nomadic habits, of which we find traces in the earlier literature. Tribal names gave rise to place-names and almost all the kingdoms came to have fixed boundaries. In the case of the Kuru country, we have a clear account of its territorial limits. Territorial epithets came to be applied to princes. We have innumerable instances of this in the Brāhmaṇic literature. A king Pratipīya of the Kuru family is described as Bālhika (Sat. Br. XII. 9. 3. 3); a second prince Bhīma is described Vaidarbha or ruler of the Vidarbha region; two other princes Dhṛitarāṣṭra and Ajātaśatru are designated Kāsyā or ruler of the Kāsi kingdom; two princes of Kośala are described as Kauśalya i.e. Para Āñāra and Hairanyanābha. Such local epithets are very common and we find them applied even to ordinary people, to distinguish them from others of the same name. Thus Proti is called Kauśāmveya, Citra is called Gāngāyani, Āśvalāyana is called Kauśalya, while one more is called Naimiṣya. The importance of this conception of territorial sovereignty is also felt in the Coronation ritual. The king as we have seen, is made to ascend the quarters i.e., the North, South, East and West, symbolic of his supremacy over these regions. Furthermore, as will be pointed out, the suzerain overlord's ideal of conquest embraced the whole region of the country then known extending from the hills to the sea.

(b). In regard to the newer ideas as to the nature of sovereignty, some further light is thrown by the Rājasūya ritual. As we have seen already, in the Abhisēcanīya, the king was made to make offerings to Savitṛ Satyaprasava, Agni Gr̥hapatī, Soma Vanaspatī, Br̥haspatī Vākpatī, Rudra Paśupati, Mitra Satya, and Varuṇa Dharmapatī, with a view to his investment with their

authority and functions. We need not stretch our imagination, but the text as well as the interpretation is so clear that it gives a full import of the ceremonies and their constitutional significance. The priest himself, thus addressed the king and prayed :—

“May Savitṛ quicken thee for ruling, Agni for householders, Soma for trees, Bṛhaspati for speech, Indra for lordship, Rudra for cattle, Mitra for truth and Varuṇa for the lord of the law.”

The meaning is apparent; the prince was vested with supreme ruling authority and this comprised the general over-lordship of the people, full governing authority, general superintendence over the plants and animals (*i.e.* agriculture and cattle) and the power of administering the laws as the Vicegerent of Lord Varuṇa, the divine Judge *par-excellence*. The consummation of investiture was attained by the king-elect's stepping over the tiger-skin (symbolic of his greatness and conquest of enemies; cf. the epithet *Vyāghrapratiṣṭha* p. 98), his investment with the wooden sacrificial sword symbolising regal and legal authority, his identification with Indra and Varuṇa, and the proclamation of his immunity from punishment (*Adanḍya*) which in those days made him free from the jealousy or intrigue of rivals and factions.

IMPERIALISM AND CONQUEST. — While Sovereign authority was thus consolidated, the princes of those ages directed their attention to conquest. Security at home freed their energies and these were devoted to exploits outside their own territorial limits. The desire for universal over-lordship floated before their eyes. This conquest, again, was not merely an act of military success, but came to be associated with religious ceremonies and sacrifices which gave it the stamp of

moral recognition. The conqueror who performed the Vājapeya or the Aśvamedha was not an ordinary mortal relying on brute force, but was one pre-eminent among men whose dignity approached that of Indra or the other divine rulers of this universe and as in the case of the latter, universal dominion over the whole of Aryan-dom "from the hills to the sea" was the aim of the victor. The types of imperial authority varied, though at the present moment we have little means of deciding the nature and character of the Suzerain's authority vested by the performance of the different rites. The only information is that supplied by the details of the religious literature which mention the different inaugural ceremonies for conferring varied types of authority. There was the ordinary Abhiṣeka or coronation of a king and over and above there were the Vājapeya, the Aśvamedha, the Puṇarābhiṣeka and the Aindra-Mahābhiṣeka all of which conferred higher sovereign power.

LIST OF CONQUERORS.—The Brāhmaṇas and the Śrauta Sūtras give us lists of such kings as aspired to universal dominion and attained it with the performance of the various rites and sacrifices.

According to the Aitareya Br., the following kings attained supreme headship by the performance of the Rājasūya and the Aindra-Mahābhiṣeka.

Name of kings :	country.	consecrating priest.
Janamejaya son of Parīkṣit	Kuru	... Tura Kāvaśeya
Śāryāta Mānava Cyavana Bhārgava
Śatānika Satrājita	... Kuru	... Somaśuṣman
Āmvaśṭhya	* Vājaratnāyana ... Parvata and Nārada

Name of kings :	country.	consecrating priest.
Yadhbāmārauṣṭhi of the race of Ugrasena	Kuru	Parvata and Narada
Viśvakarman of the race of Bhuvana	Kaśyapa
Sudās Son of Pijavana	Pañcāla (?)	Vasiṣṭha
Marutta, of the race of Avikṣit	Samvarta Āngirasa
Vairocana	Aṅga	Udamaya Ātreyā
Bharata, son of Duḥṣanta	Kuru	Dīrghatamas Māmateya
Durmukha	Pañcāla	Bṛhaduktha
Atyarāti son of Janantapa	Sātyahavya Vasiṣṭha

In the Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa, we have another list which is of Aśvamedhin kings. The kings who became universal monarchs were—

1. Janamejaya Pārikṣita whose priest was Indrota Daivāpi
Śaunaka
2. Bhimasena Pārikṣita
3. Ugrasena "
4. Śrutasena "
5. Para Āṭnāra the Kośala king
6. Purukutsa the Ikṣāku king
7. Marutta Avikṣita the Āyogava king
8. Kraivya the Pañcāla king
9. Dhvansu Dvaitavana king of the Matsyas
10. Bharata Duḥṣanti king of the Kurus
11. R̥śabha Yāgnatūra
12. Sātrāēha the Pañcāla king
13. Sātanika Sātrājita the Kuru king.

The list in the Sāṅkhayana Śrauta is a little different. It mentions (XVI, 9) Janamejaya, Ugrasena, Bhimasena, Śrutasena, R̄ṣabha Yāgnātura, Vaideha Albāra and Marutta Avikṣita.

We have details about such conquerors in the Epic and the Purāṇas. The Epic Mahābhārata (Drona. par.) gives us a list of sixteen kings viz. Marutta Avikṣita, Suhotra son of Atithi Bṛhadratha Aṅga, Sivi Ausinara, Bharata, Rāma Son of Daśaratha, Bhagiratha, Dilipa, Māndhāṭ, Yajāti, Ambarīṣa, Saśavindu, Gaya, Rantideva, Sagara and Pṛthu.

The character of this imperialism was however different from that which later on ended in the unification of the whole country under one sceptre. These early conquerors, as a rule, remained satisfied with the acknowledgement of their sovereign authority and demanded of the conquered only tribute and service. Consequently, their imperialism was a compromise between universal monarchy to the exclusion of sub-ordinate princes and of full tribal independence. The annihilation of conquered princes was reserved for a later age and the newer Imperialism arose in the East.

RETROSPECT AND SUMMARY OF POLITICAL EVOLUTION.—Before we pass on to the next chapter, we must attempt to summarise the character of political evolution. The leading events in the political life of the later Vedic age were thus—

(1) The establishment of a consolidated royal authority strengthened by a military aristocracy and a priesthood.

(2) Political integration through ritual and religion and the regulation of the functions of the various elements in the body-politic.

- (3) Definition of the functions of sovereign authority.
- (4) Desire for the establishment of universal overlordship.

All these have been described in detail, but something requires to be said about the influence of the priest-hood and the compromise it brought about.

The priestly families who gained a recognized position in politics, presumably cast their influence on the side of the *de facto* ruler. That was something the importance of which could not be minimised. In our own days Clericalism is a force in Europe and the authority and voice of the priests and bishops still predominates in many countries. In the Middle ages or the Dark ages, it was greater. It was they who ruled the minds of men. They made and unmade princes and humbled their proudest opponents to the dust. They introduced order in life. They advised the princes, they spurred the people on to the cause of rational movements, humanism and progress. Science and democracy have knelled the death-knell of priest-craft but in spite of it, they are yet a potent force in civilised Europe, which nobody can neglect.

In India the art or the ideal of the priestly class had a deeper influence. It instilled in the minds of the common people a veneration for royalty and a faith in social self-realisation through the ruling sovereign. The anointed of Indra and Varuna wielding their functions was one who could not be dis-obeyed, since disobedience without cause was sure to bring the vengeance

Need of ritual; power and continuance of allegiance guaranteed. of the angry rulers of the universe. Sacerdotalism thus inculcated obedience and led to the permanence of allegiance so long as the king injured neither in life nor limb and so long as he preserved the prosperity of the community.

Again, while regal authority was glorified and defined, the ruler of the people was put within checks. His Oath reminded him of his pledge to govern according to accepted rules of conduct and constantly inculcated upon him the duty of carrying out his part of the compact entered into with the solemn approval of the divine rulers. While this relation between the governor and the governed was thus laid down, the social and political outlook widened. The conflict of classes or the war of sections passed into the back-ground and a social consciousness came into being characterised by a subjective veneration for the interest of the whole. Last of all, there emerged that longing for the establishment of universal rule which was but the manifestation of the desire to realise organic unity so far as it related to political life.

Sacerdotalism thus, introduced new ideas and principles and masked the real character of the impending change. It hid from the popular attention the fact that active popular control was decaying. In spite of this, it got approval from the people since it eliminated to a large extent the elements of violence and disturbance. Probably, the mass of the peaceful *Vis* welcomed its influence. Chances of war or disputes for the throne became less common and the ordinary people profiting by it thought it their duty more to obey than to question.

While the priest-hood became the exponents of a regulated social ideal which they promulgated and the safety of which they safe-guarded from regal violence, their position in the political machinery was defined and limitations were put on them. The *concordat* which was thus established between the two ruling principles, neutralised the grave consequences of the superiority of the other. The priestly ideal put a check to tyranny. At the

same time the evils of a theocracy were averted. The priests themselves became excluded from the chance of gaining political power. On this head, the discussion in the Aitareya Br. is interesting and shows how the relation of Brāhma and Kṣattria were conceived in those days. The two were regarded as the complements of each other. Their conflict was fatal to the king and the Rāṣṭra. To the priest-hood was assigned a position of moral superiority, though in the body-politic royalty was vested with the highest powers and privileges. The priest in the Coronation sacrifice sat below the king. The latter in his turn was made to take the oath from the priest.

The compromise thus arrived at was significant and remarkable in the history of the political evolution of India. It brought to a close the conflict of two opposite principles as well as the jarring interests and ideals of two sets of people, viz. the Brāhmaṇas and the Kṣatriyas, who by their conflicts and co-operation have done much to evolve the various aspects of Indian culture. The race of hardy warriors, who yearned after uncontrolled dominion, deified power and sovereign authority and sought the welfare of the community through its agency. Opposed to them were the sacerdotal caste the Brāhmaṇas who felt more for the individual and looked for his emancipation through his own activity. They idolised law and order and opposed violent changes. The two thus closely connected, represented conflicting principles. The one stood for dominion and expansion, the other for systematisation and order. The one thought for the community as a whole, the other felt for the individual. The one stood for collectivism the other for individual effort; the one for obedience, the other for self-realisation, the one for the will, the other for reason. The Kṣatriya ruler yearned for his

sovereignty "indivisible and absolute" while the priest contended for the total emancipation of society from politics. As a result of this conflict of the two peoples and the subsequent compromise, a regulated constitutional life came into being.

The evolution of this *regime*, marked the end of that Decay of popular primitive stage of polical life characterised by activity. lawlessness and indiscriminate popular interference in everything. The decay of this popular domination is easily proved by the absence of the mention of the *Samitis* or the *Sangramas* and the corresponding importance of the *Sabha* or the *Purisat*. The authority of kings legalised by the sanction of the gods through sacrifice, was consolidated by the alliance of the priesthood. Conquest beyond the limits of his state also strengthened the position of an abititions king.

Yet inspite of this, kings never became irresponsible. For if ritual safe-guarded their position, it did not confer thereby irresponsibility or government according to will. The king never became superior to law and in the small states of those days, public opinion expressed itself freely. Tyranny or arbitrary conduct made the king lose their sympathy and ultimately their allegiance. We have given one or two instances of the expulsion of kings. This right of expelling kings on the part of the people is also apparent from the ritual for the restoration of deposed monarchs.

Furthermore, in spite of the consolidation of regal authority, real sovereignty seems to have remained vested ultimately in the people and their acceptance retained its old importance. Owing to the influence of the new ideas or the preponderance of ritualism, popular election and acceptance took a new form. They became part and parcel of the ceremony of inauguration.

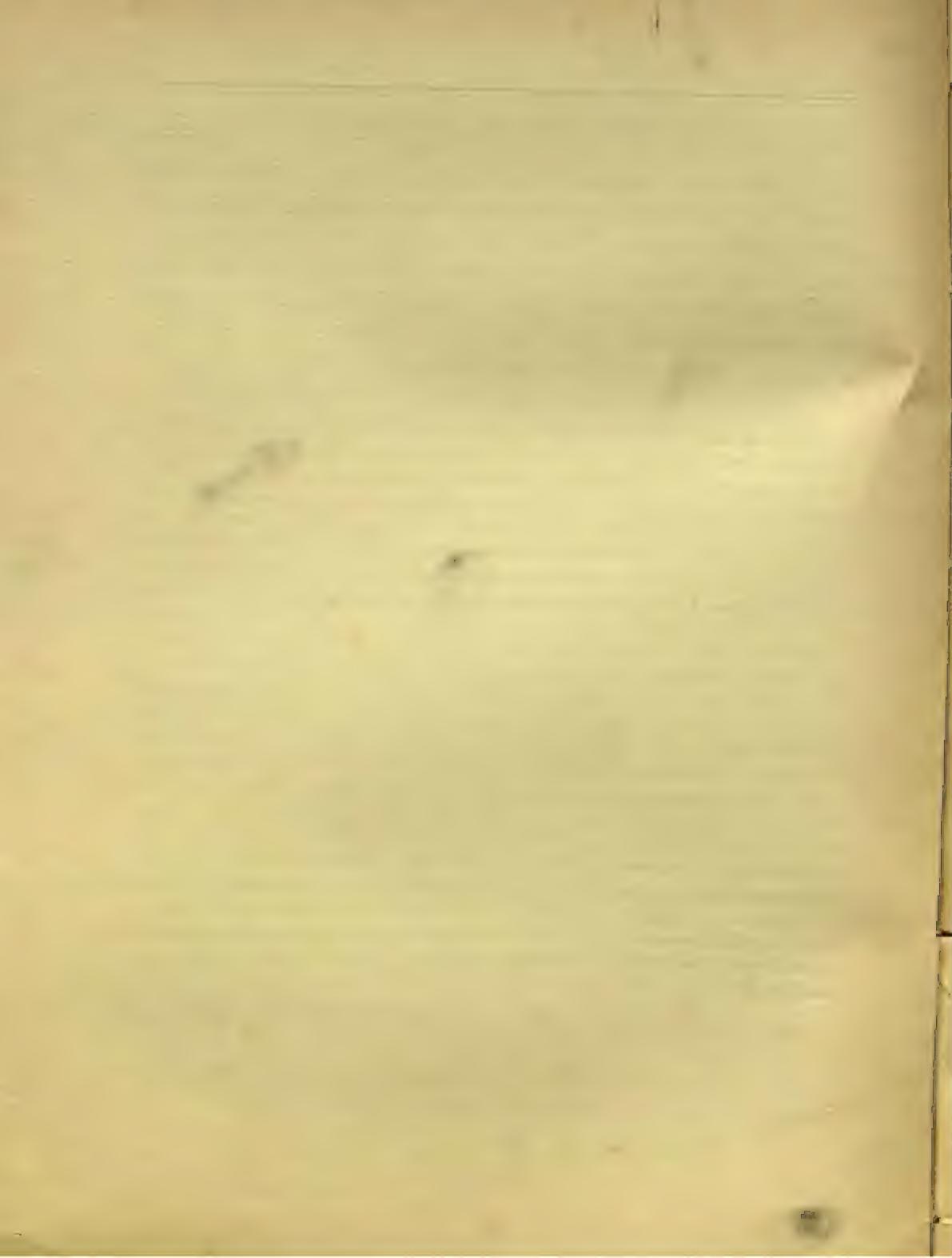
The formal proclamation and acceptance by the people through the sprinkling ceremony remained as important as ever. More-over, the constant presence of popular representatives in all inaugurations shows the importance of the people. In the Rājsūya, we find not only the Grāmapi, but also the representatives of the various orders. In the Aśvamedha, too, the class representatives remained present during the consecration of the horse and its guardians were also selected out of them. This clearly shows the importance of public opinion. In truth, the change was more of form than of principle. The people retained their right which they exercised once to its very letter. But as complexities had arisen and as it was impossible to consult the opinion of all individuals, their participation in election and choice tended to take a ritualistic form. They were to remain present and at the same time they were to signify their approval by sprinkling water on the head of the new-elected instead of the practice of sounding "yes" or "no" or by clash of arms, as in the case of other nations of antiquity. How arose this practice of sprinkling will ever remain a

Sprinkling. mystery. The water with which the sprinkling was done, had also its significance since it comprised the water of rivers and seas sacred to the people and a mixture of these symbolised the sovereignty of the king over those regions.

Similar significance attached to the other ceremonies e.g., the Chariot-race, the Cow raid and the Dice-play. They show the retention of older tests for recognising the king's superiority in valour and physical prowess. His excellence in the Cow-raid, showed in him those qualifications which distinguished the early chiefs in the cattle forays. The Chariot-race too was important

since it served as a means of testing the military qualities of the king. In India it seems to have been often resorted to for the settlement of disputes. Even the gods, if we are to believe in the Aitareya Brāhmaṇa resorted to it to settle disputes and the victor was declared the winner. Similarly, the victor in the fictitious chariot-race was regarded as the fittest man for kingship. The Dice-play showed the sagacity of the new king.

NOTE—It would be difficult to find out exact parallels of the ideas and rituals found in the Brāhmaṇa literature, but instances may be cited to show similar developments in the history of other communities. The influence of cosmic beliefs on political organisation is found everywhere in the ancient world. In Egypt, the king was the embodiment of *Ra* and his mundane counter-part, and politics was intimately connected with religious beliefs and ceremonial. In the ancient Sumerian cities, the *Patesis* combined the functions of royalty and priesthood. Similar was the case in Ancient Greece where monarchy in the Heroic period was more divine than regal or political. Though changes were gradually introduced through the uprising of the popular element, much of the older ceremonial survived. Among the Molossians, there survived the custom of consolidating the relation between the king and his people by a sacrifice to Zeus, after which the king and the people swore to respect each other's rights. (Greenidge G. C. H., p. 151). The Romans too, regarded *Imperium* as something flowing from the gods and its exercise required divine sanction. Even after the fall of monarchy, this idea survived. Among the Hebrews, the king was supposed to exercise the authority which was vested in him by God and there existed the idea of a double covenant between the Almighty and the king and between the king and the people. Remnants of these ideas survived during the Middle Ages. Modern progress has put an end to many of these ideas in the nineteenth century, but we often find echoes of it in the utterances of some princes. The accession to office whether of Kings or of Presidents is often associated with Divine service and a complicated ritual. The King's oath even now retains its importance in many countries, especially in England. The oath remained of vital importance in the Spartan constitution where it was interchanged every month between the kings and the Ephors.



The Mahābhārata
Evidence

THE history of the later vedic age can well be gathered from the Mahābhārata and the Rāmāyaṇa, for, as we have said already, the Epics ought to be regarded as the traditional history of that remote period. We take the Mahābhārata first.

General political condition of India.—The original historical kernel of the great Epic gives us a detailed account of the Kuru rulers of that time and incidentally furnishes us with a contemporary general account of Indian states and clans. It is with this only that we are concerned but before attempting to show the amount of popular authority and control over their princes or their government, we may survey the political condition of India about the time of the Great War. From an analysis of the Epic evidence we know that :—

(1). The whole of Northern India was divided into a number of states more or less independent as far as internal government was concerned, but acknowledging the suzerainty of the paramount power of the day.

(2). That the Madhyadeśa or the region round the Kuru Political life in country was regarded as the intellectual and different regions. cultural centre of the Aryans. The manners and customs of people of the western border i.e., those of the Madras and the Vāhikas, were looked down upon by the people of the

Central region. On the other hand, Eastern India was regarded as the land of the Śūdras *par excellence*, and this is apparent from the denunciation of Āṅga by the king of Madra. Āṅga, Vaṅga and the coastal regions are described in more than one place as being ruled by *mleccha* princes. In addition to these, some of the ruling Kṣatriya families of the border region were regarded as Vṛātyas. Prominent among them were the Yādavas, the ruling race in the extreme south who had a sort of oligarchic ruling confederation.

(3). The form of government varied. In the west, the old Aryan tribal principle was supreme and there were numerous petty states either ruled by local princes guided in all matters by popular opinion or were democratic republics. In the central region e.g. in the land of the Kurus and the Matsyas the rulers were princes in name only. In the Kuru country, this popular sovereignty was so great that it is difficult to form easily an impression as to whether the government can be described as a monarchy at all. It is only in the east that the princes had a greater chance of ruling irresponsibly. The large number of wild tribes differing from each other in language, religion, race and temperament, the large number

Eastern Imperialism. of elephants (a potent instrument in ancient warfare) found there in abundance, the cheapness of other materials required for a fighting force all made it easy for the eastern princes to raise large armies with which to rule absolutely without even consulting the opinion of their subjects. The Aryan settlers were few and these consisted mainly of the ruling families and their hereditary officials, and hence there was no opposition from them. This made not only absolutism possible but fostered a lust for dominion

outside the tribal territory which was the limit of domination in the west and centre of India. To these, again, must be attributed the fact that the East was the land where the later type of imperialism took its rise—an imperialism which meant something more than mere suzerainty and was nothing less than universal rule to the exclusion of local princes and absolutism to its utmost limit.

In such a state of affairs, Jarāsandha, the Magadha king thought of pursuing a policy of "blood and iron." He had many allies, the most prominent of whom were Vāsudeva, the king of Pāṇḍra and Vāṅga, Śbagadatta of Kāmarūpa, and a number of central Indian rulers including the Cedi Śisupāla and some of the Bhojas.

Having thus given a survey of political development, we proceed to cite evidence from the great Epic to show the extent of popular sovereignty in those days. As regards the central region, we take the Kuru country and describe its history in detail, because the Mahābhārata records mainly the traditional history of that country. As to other states, we have only some passing reference or some occasional details only when we are on the eve of the great war. Under the circumstances, lack of information prevents us from giving details as to most of these except the Kurus.

For the South, we must confine ourselves to the detailed description of the Yādava constitution and narrate some instances from Yādava history as recorded in the Epic to prove our point.

Lastly, we must conclude by giving some details as to the tribal republics which retained their democratic constitution in the various parts of the country. These, as a rule flourished

in the frontier regions to the west and north or in the secluded areas. In the *Mahābhārata*, these states are described as *Gāpas*. Of these, we shall only give a list, and this will be supplemented later on by short historical notices on each of them. But, before we pass on to the other subjects, we must make some attempt to describe the general characteristics of these republics e.g.

(a) They were outside the influence of the political forces, which operated in the *Madhyadeśa*.

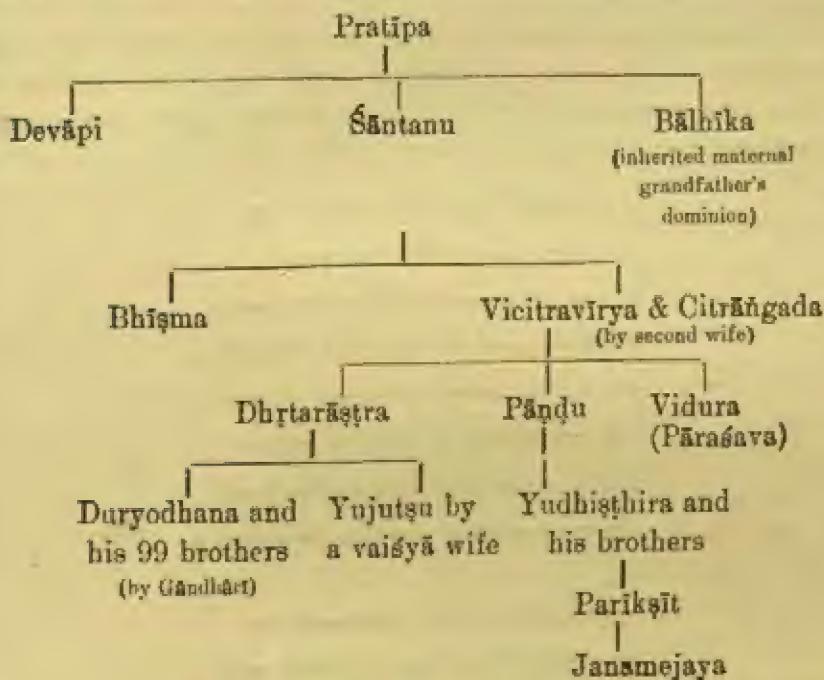
(b) They were dominated by some particular tribe or by members of one caste.

The *Mālavas*, *Yaudheyas*, *Trigartas* and some other *Gāpas* were mainly *Kṣatriyas*. The *Vātadhbāṇes* and the *Mādhyamakeyas* were *Brāhmaṇa gāpas*, while the *Grāmaṇīyas* of the Indus region and the *Ābbiras* on the bank of the *Sarasvati* were *Śūdras* by caste.

The Kuru Country.

To all readers of the *Mahābhārata* it would be apparent that the epic is primarily the history of the Kuru country. From the historical kernel which now forms only a small fraction of the vast encyclopædia, we have the following traditional account of the reign of five generations of the royal family.*

* A complete history of the Kuru line of kings as well as the relation of the Kurus to the earlier Vedic tribes has already been attempted. We hold that the *Mahābhārata* is nothing but the traditional history of the Vedic period and we have tried to establish our point already. In a paper entitled "Early Indian Chronology" an attempt will be made to identify the rulers of the Kuru line as given in the *Mahābhārata* (*Adiparva*, Chs. 94 & 95) with the princes, who are found in the *Ṛgveda* and the other *Saṃhitās*.



Now, from the account recorded in the great Epic, we find that in the reign of each of these kings we have some constitutional events of importance to record and from these we can form an idea as to the extent of popular sovereignty. The earliest of these Pratīpa had three sons e.g. Devāpi, Bāhika, and Śāntanu. Devāpi suffered from some skin disease. When old, the king thought of installing Devāpi on the throne and made preparations for his investiture. Thereupon, the Brahmins, the elders, the rural people, and the citizens prevented him. They approached him and said that though the eldest prince was worthy and otherwise agreeable, he suffered from skin disease and hence he was not acceptable to the gods.

Dissuaded by the force of their argument and the weight of public opinion, the king had to give way and abandon the idea of crowning Devāpi. This however made him unhappy and he retired to the forest. Cf.

तं ब्राह्मणाय हृषाय पौरजानपदे: सह ।
 सर्वे निवारयामासुर्देवापेरभिषेचनम् ॥
 म तच्छुला तु नृपतिरभिषेकनिवारणम् ।
 अशुकण्ठोऽभवद्राजा पर्यग्नोचत चामजम् ॥
 एवं वदान्यो धर्मज्ञः सत्यसन्ध्य सोऽभवत् ।
 पियः प्रजानामपि स त्वं गदोयेण प्रदूषितः ॥
 हीनाङ्गं पृथिवीपालं नाभिनन्दन्ति देवताः ।
 इति छला नृपते उपर्युक्तं प्रत्ययेधन् द्विनृपं भाः ॥

 ततः प्रव्याप्तिराङ्गोऽसौ पुत्रशोकसमन्वितः ।
 निवारितं नृपं हृषा देवापि संशितो वनम् ॥
 वाहौको भासुलकूलं तजा राज्यं समाचितः ।
 पितृण् भ्रातृण् परित्वज्य प्राप्तवान् परम्परिमत् ॥
 वाहौकिन त्वं तु जातः शास्त्रानुजीकिविनृतः ।
 पितृयुपरते राजन् राजाः राज्यमकारयत् ॥

Udyoga ch. 149.

On his withdrawal, the second son Bālbīka became king for a time, but he too abdicated in favour of his younger brother Śāntanu who was crowned king by the people and the magnates.

Śāntanu's reign otherwise uneventful was marked towards its end by an event of constitutional importance. It was the

voluntary abdication of his only legitimate son and heir to the throne, the celebrated Bhīṣma. The king being smitten with love for the daughter of a fisherman, and yet not daring to accept her on account of the hard terms proposed by the father of the girl, who insisted on the stipulation that the son of his daughter by the king would be the heir to the throne to the exclusion of the virtuous Bhīṣma, was in a difficult position. The dutiful son, to fulfil his father's wishes, boldly went to the fisherman and asked him to bestow his daughter on the king and to remove all objections on his part, he voluntarily renounced his claim to the throne in a *Sabhā* in the presence of the members. The story is given in the *Ādi-parva*, ch. CI. The whole transaction, we are told took place in the presence of the members of the *Sabhā*.

Śāntanu by this marriage had two sons Citrāṅgada and Vicitravīrya. The elder succeeded as king but soon he was killed in a war with the Gandharvas. The faithful Bhīṣma acted as the regent of the state, serving the cause of his minor young brother and administered the state according to the counsel of his jealous step-mother Satyavati. Bhīṣma signalled his devotion by acquiring three brides for his step-brother Vicitravīrya (see *Ādi*, ch. 96). One of these brides, Ambā, was however sent back to her own kinsmen on account of her entreaties that she had chosen the king of the Saubhas as her lord. This however proved a great misfortune for her. The king of the Saubhas rejected her since she was the victory prize of another, according to the custom of those days. Rejected by both the parties, she in revenge implored the assistance of Rāma Jāmadagnya—the great champion of militant brahminism, to come and persuade Bhīṣma to take her for one of

his brothers. This being refused the two decided to appeal to the supreme arbitration of force and fought for several days.

The combat ended in a draw. The rest of the events is narrated in the Ādi-parva. But here again we meet with another event of constitutional importance which though not mentioned in the Ādi parva is incidentally narrated in the Udyoga-parva which seems to have preserved the true historical account. In the 147th chapter of that Parva, we have an account of the history of the Kuru country recorded by Bhīṣma himself. From that we know that Vicitravīrya who succeeded Śāntanu was too fond of women and consequently fell a victim to Yaksmā (Phthisis) consumption and at the same time the Kuru country being invaded by the terrible Brahmin warrior, Paraśurāma the king was banished by the citizens. (रामभयादेव नागरैविं पश्यसितः)

Next, a pestilence broke out and carried away a large number of inhabitants and only a small portion of the population survived. There was no king, the government fell into disorder and the misery of the people knew no bounds. Thereupon the people headed by the elders approached Bhīṣma the rightful heir to the throne. They together with Kāli, the wife of Śāntanu (step mother of Bhīṣma) besought the worthy prince to take up the reins of government and to save the country from destruction.

This however Bhīṣma refused. He reminded them of his vow (which he had taken before the assembly) of celibacy and of renunciation and persuaded the queen-mother to allow the widowed queens of the late sovereign to raise issue by the practice of *Niyoga*.

Of these three sons, the eldest Dhṛtarāṣṭra was not eligible for kingship as he was blind (*Udyoga*, ch. 147, v. 38.). Vidura too, was excluded being born of a slave-girl. Pāṇḍu thus became king though for a time Bhīṣma acted as the real ruler of the country. He however soon forsook the world and with his wives spent his time in the forest, making over his kingdom to his blind elder brother though this point is not clear in the account of the *Adi-parva* (ch. 119). The story of the handing over of the kingdom to his brother by Pāṇḍu is again put in the 148th chapter of the *Udyoga-parva* in the mouth of Bhāradvāja. There Drona, the speaker, makes the statement that the people had accepted Dhṛtarāṣṭra as king.

The blind Dhṛtarāṣṭra thus became the next king. His claims rested partly on his brother's abdication and gift and on popular sanction. Probably, this popular support enabled him to rule, for there existed a section of elders, who never recognised him as king (*Udyoga*, ch. 147).

It would appear from the following *ślokas* that Dhṛtarāṣṭra held the throne by virtue of his brother's abdication, and acceptance by the people. Some of the Kuru elders like Drona regarded Dhṛtarāṣṭra as a rightful king though they never thought of this as constituting a bar to the succession of the Pāṇḍavas. But others like Bhīṣma regarded Dhṛtarāṣṭra as a mere figure-head representing royalty and sought to further the cause of the young prince Yudhiṣṭhira the son of Pāṇḍu to the exclusion of Dhṛtarāṣṭra's sons. The views of Drona are found in the following verses :—cf.

तथा पाण्डुनेरपतिः सत्यसम्यो वितेन्द्रियः ।

राजा कुरुणां धर्मात्मा सुवतः सुसमाप्तिः । २

जेष्ठाय राज्यमददत् धृतराष्ट्राय धीमते ।
 यवौयसे तथा चत्रे कुरुवंशिवर्हनः ॥

 ततः सर्वाः प्रजास्तात धृतराष्ट्रं जनेश्वरम् ।
 अन्यपद्यन्त विधिवद् यथा पाण्डुं जनाधिपम् ॥

Udyoga ch. 148.

Bhiṣma's opinion regarding Duryodhana's claim is found in his admonition to that prince in the midst of the assembly of Bhārata elders and allies summoned to settle the dispute about the succession to the Kuru kingdom.

अन्यः करणहीनत्वाच वै राजा पिता तव ।
 राजा तु पाण्डुरभवत् महात्मा लोकविश्वतः ॥
 स राजा तस्य ते पुत्राः पितुर्दीयाद्यहारिणः ।
 मा तात कलहं कार्षी राज्यस्थाईं प्रदीयताम् ॥

Udyo. ch. 147.

ज्येष्ठः प्रभैश्चितो राज्यादैनाङ्ग इति भारत ॥
 पाण्डुस्तु राज्यं ममाप्तः कनौयानपिसन्नुपः ॥
 विनाशे तस्य पुत्राणामिदं राज्यमरिन्दम् ॥

पराजपुत्रो द्वास्त्रामौ परस्तं हर्तुमिच्छसि ॥ Udyo. ch. 149.

Elsewhere, the Mahābhārata (Udyoga, ch. 147) gives us another account of the Kuru state and this throws a flood of light on the events and their importance. In it, Bhiṣma narrates before the assembly the whole story from his own abdication and determination to serve his step-brother. Incidentally, we are further told that Vicitravīrya was excluded from the kingdom by his people, and on his exile the people approached Bhiṣma (tadābhya-

dhāvanmāneva prajāḥ kṣudhbhayapīdītāḥ—Udyo., ch. 147–25) and requested him to ascend the throne which but for his voluntary renunciation was his and told him that it was the will of the people, that he should become king for the benefit of the people : cf.

ततो रामेन समरे इन्द्रयुडसुपागमम् ।
 स हि रामभयादेभिन्नागरैर्विप्रवासितः ॥
 दारेष्वप्यतिषत्त्वं यद्याणं समपद्यत ।
 यदा त्वराजके राङ्गे न ववर्धं सुरेश्वरः ॥
 तदाभ्यधावन्मासिव प्रजाः कुङ्गयपौडिताः ॥
 प्रजा ऊरुः—उपचौणाः प्रजाः सर्वा राजा भव भवाय नः ।
 ईतीः प्रनुद भद्रं ते शान्तनोः कुलवह्णः ॥
 पौडिन्ते ते प्रजाः सर्वा व्याधिभिर्भृशदारुणैः ।
 अत्यावशिष्टा गाङ्गेय ताः परिवातुमर्हसि ॥
 आधीन् प्रणुद वौर त्वं प्रजा धर्मेन पालय ।
 त्वयि जीवति मा राङ्गं विनाशसुपगच्छतु ॥

 ततः पौरा महाराज माता कालौ च मे शुभा ॥
 भृत्याः पुरोहिताचार्याः द्राघ्नाथ वहुचुताः ।
 मामुचुर्भृशसन्तसा भव राजेति सन्ततम् ॥

The people who approached Bhīṣma included the Pauras or the townsmen (or burghers), the office-bearers of the state the priests and the Brāhmaṇas. Their appeal fell on deaf ears and Bhīṣma true to his principles, refused to violate his oath. The story shows clearly how the people took upon themselves the task of filling the throne, and the language too is free from ambiguity.

However, matters soon came to a head. The sons of Pāṇḍu grew up to manhood ; their virtues attracted the people to their side and they began to speak openly for the accession of the Pāṇḍava prince to the throne. This was galling to Duryodhana the eldest of Dhṛitarāshṭra's sons and he related to his father the story of the great popularity of the Pāṇḍavas (Ādi, 141, 32-38). As the people wanted the Pāṇḍavas to be their rulers in place of Dhṛitarāshṭra, Duryodhana asked his father to banish the five brothers to the city of Vārāṇavata, thus removing them from the eyes of the citizens.

This however was a step which the old king did not disapprove. But he feared the consequences of the step, which might lead to a revolution, in which the people were sure to take the side of the virtuous Yudhiṣṭhīra. The king feared for his own life and the lives of his sons, who were sure to fall victims to popular fury, and he expressed his apprehension clearly in the following words :—

भूता त्वि पाण्डुनामात्वा वलं च सततं भूतम् ।
भूताः पुरावा यौवाष्ठ तेषामपि विशेषतः ॥
ते पुरा सल्कृतास्तात् ! पाण्डुना नागरा जनाः ।
कथं युधिष्ठिरस्यार्थं न नो हन्त्यः सवान्धवान् ॥ Ādi. ch. 142.

This popular clamour for the young Pāṇḍava princes made the old king dread the consequences of ousting the Pāṇḍava princes from the state and consequently Duryodhana had recourse to the stratagem of sending them away to Vārāṇavata to be burnt down along with the inflammable house prepared by the royal conspirators. Their miraculous escape, their success at the *Sreyagnirara* of Draupadī, and their marriage are

well-known to all Indian readers of the Epic. At length, when the news of their success reached the ears of the old king, he along with his old ministers had the princes restored to their royal position, which was sanctioned by the legal right of inheritance and the force of popular choice (प्रकृतीनामनुमते पदे स्थापन्ति पाण्डवाः। Adi., 204—11). Here too the language is significant. The Pāṇḍavas are described as being established by virtue of popular choice. Their restoration however was short-lived.

Events did not pass smoothly. The sons of Dhṛitarāṣṭra, who seemed to have based their claims upon the regency of their blind father, sanctioned by the handing over of authority to him by Pāṇḍu on the eve of his abdication, did not relish the prospect of the Pāṇḍavas' succession to the throne and remained constantly on the alert to dispossess them through force or fraud. They invited them to a dice-play, in which the Pāṇḍavas lost everything.* Restored once more, they again yielded to the temptation of a re-play, lost every thing and departed, consenting to live as hermits for twelve years with another year's life *incognito*. When at the end of that period, they returned and claimed their inheritance. This was refused by their opponents and thereupon the parties had recourse to the supreme arbitration of might. Both allied themselves with friendly kings and India was divided into two great camps. All this together with the history of the war is too well-known to be

* This dice-play was of great significance. As we all know, it was customary for princes during their coronation to prove their worth by success in a dice-play. Probably, this has been utilised by the Epic poet. Again, this dice-play does not show that the rulers could transfer everything at their will but that they merely staked their own rights which did not affect the liberties of the people.

narrated here, particularly because the subsequent history is of no use to us.

Soon the great war was over. The Pāṇḍavas alone survived and the eldest of them became *de facto* ruler of the state by right of conquest. The old blind Dhṛitarāṣṭra retired to the forest, but not before he had given an account of his rule to the Kuru community, both as a regent and a *de facto* ruler who had remained the titular head of the state for so long a period. Weak, weary, and worn out in body and mind, he craved pardon from his people for the sins of his sons; recounted the past history of the Kuru monarchy, explained the circumstances in which the crown had been forced upon him, expressed his present inability to govern, and sorrowfully sought their permission to leave for the forest. At the same time, *he handed over the reins of lawful authority to Yudhiṣṭhīra, in whose hands were placed the fortunes of his subjects.* The whole account is given in the eighth and ninth chapters of the Aśrama-vāsika Parva which preserves the farewell utterances of the blind king at a meeting of the Pauras and Jānapadas of all castes not excluding the Sūdras (Aś., VIII, & IX). The whole account of this parting speech of the old king deserves our best attention. The king's speech is uttered in a spirit of conciliation : cf.

उवाच भविमान् राजा धृतराष्ट्रो विश्वाम्यते ।

भवन्तः कुरवचैव चिरकालं सहोषिताः ॥

परस्परस्य सुहृदः परस्परहिते रताः ॥

यथाकं भवति॑ चैव येवं श्रीतिहि॒ शास्त्रतो ।

न च सान्येषु देशेषु राजाभिति॑ मतिमन्म ॥

यान्तोऽस्मि वयसानेन तथा पुत्रविनाकृतः ।
उपवासकृश्यथास्मि गान्धारौ सहितोऽनघाः ॥

गान्धारुः पालयामास यथावद्भुव्यासिमाम् ।
तथा विचिच्छौर्यं भौधेन परिपालितः ॥
पालयामास वस्त्रात् विदितार्थी न संशयः ।
यथा च पाण्डुभौतां मे दयितो भवतामभृत् ॥
स चापि पालयामास यथावत्तच विश्व इ ।
मया च भवतां सम्यक् शशुधा या कृतानघाः ॥
असम्यवा! महाभागस्त्रात् चन्द्रव्यमतन्द्रिते ॥

तस्मया साधु वायोदयं यदि वासाधु वै कृतम् ।
तदो हृदि न कर्तव्यं मया वडोऽयमस्त्रिजिः ॥
हृष्टोऽयं हतपुत्रोऽयं दुखितोऽयं नराधिषः ।
पूर्वराजां च पूर्वोदयं इति कल्पानुजानय ॥

These are not the words of a tyrant haughtily dictating terms to his subjects cowed with fear of despotic authority. They are on the other hand, the words of a popular monarch who had ever leaned on popular support and who on the approaching close of his career was rendering an account of himself to the people in tones of affection and regret. Many of the words uttered by him are significant. Repeated apologies are offered; the next successor Yudhiṣṭhīra is placed in the hands of the and is referred to as a *nāya* or deposit, while the

the kingdom is described as a trust (*nyāsa*) in the hands of Yudhiṣṭhīra.

युधिष्ठिरो महातेजा भवतः पात्रयिष्यति ॥
 अवश्यमेव वक्तव्यमिति कृत्वा व्रतीमि वः ।
 एष न्यासो मया दत्तः सर्वां वो युधिष्ठिरः ॥
 भवन्तोऽस्य च वौरस्य न्यासभुताः कृता मया ॥

Lastly, after saying that he never offended them, (Sl. 15—18.) he seeks permission to retire to the forest.

On the retirement of the old king, Yudhiṣṭhīra the head of the Pāṇḍava brothers, was accepted as king and he governed well. After his retirement along with his brothers, Parīkṣit, the grandson of Arjuna, was raised to the throne with the consent of the people and on his death his son Janamejaya was crowned king by the citizens, the ministers, and the Rāja-purohita cf.

ततो नृपेन्तचकतेजसा हते प्रसुच्य सर्वाः परलोकस्तिक्षयाः ।
 शुचिहिंजो राजपुरोहितस्तदा तथैव ते तस्य नृपस्य मन्दिषाः ।
 नृप शिशुं तस्य सृतं प्रचकिरे समेत्य सर्वं पुरवासिनो जना ॥

(Ādi ch. 44. 5.)

From the evidences summarised above, we may come to the conclusion that in the Kuru country popular elective royalty was the established form of Government. These kings, though they could claim the right of succession by virtue of their being heirs of past rulers, were at the same time entirely dependent on the people. The latter exercised their right of

choice and election and without their support, the king could not think of carrying on government irresponsibly.

The popular bodies—The people thus remained supreme. In the Mahābhārāta and the Rāmāyaṇa, we repeatedly hear of organised popular bodies like the *Pauras* and the *Janapadas*. But, beyond this we do not know any details about them i.e. their constitution, franchise, or mode of exercise of their powers. Everything concerning them has been lost. But it is not impossible to recognize that the *Pauras* were the burghers, who derived their importance from their residence in the capital and also from their guilds and other organisations, which were common in India from the close of the Vedic age proper. It is significant to note that they are everywhere collectively designated as *Pura-vāsinah*, *Paurāḥ*, or *Nāgarāḥ*. The *Janapadas* also seem to have been organised bodies. In later times, such organisations of Śrenis, Pūgas or Samavāyas for various purposes developed into self-governing institutions,* which are described in the Smṛtis. Details are lacking, not because they had neither organisation nor legal rights, but because their existence and influence were so well-known that none of the law-givers took care to explain them.

The King as custodian of popular rights—The king thus ruled not by virtue of divine privileges, but by popular consent. The tributes he got from his subjects, were not spent for his own luxury but for doing good to his subjects. Such was the

* The first to draw attention to these self-governing bodies was my father the late Pandit Rai R. C. Sastri Bahadur, whose article on the Municipal Institutions in Ancient India was published in 1898 in the Journal of the Buddhist Text Society. Recently, the political aspect of same subject has been discussed in detail by Mr. K. P. Jayawal in his "Hindu Polity."

duty attached to the royal office from the days of the Vedas downwards. The king was merely a custodian of his people's money and the Epic thinkers are almost unanimous in holding this opinion. Thus, when the sage Gālava offered to a king the girl Mādhavī in consideration of the payment of a heavy *sulka*, the king expressed his inability and said—“Whatever accrues to me from my people is not for my enjoyment, but belongs to the people (*paura-jānapadārtham*). A king who spends this money for his own pleasure, is neither able to achieve dharma or fame, nor gets any benefit after death.” Later on, in the Jātakas, we find an echo of the same idea. Thus, in the Tailapātra Jātaka, the king tempted by the Yakṣini formally reminded the latter that he had no control over his subjects; he was simply empowered to chastise the wicked.

In lieu of his services to the people, the king received taxes which were regarded as his *wages*. Such an idea was a heritage from the old Vedic times and was fostered by the influence of the Social Contract theory, which arose towards the close of the that period and was elaborated by the Epic thinkers. The rights of kings were thus far from being absolute and in more than one place, taxes are designated as mere *wages* (*vetana*).

Tyrannicide or deposition of wicked kings :—Thrones of despotic princes were insecure. Irresponsible rule or high-handedness often made subjects rise in revolt and they put an end to despotism. Tyrannicide was common, and the political thinkers of the Mahābhārata prescribed the death of the despot as the only remedy for tyranny. In more than one place, we have passages which call upon the people to put their vicious rulers to death. Nay, in some passages it is regarded as a duty (Śānti, ch. 67 असत्यापिष्ठसचिवो वधो लोकस्य धर्मदा ।). In one such

passage, which is preserved in the midst of verses lauding the various kinds of gifts, we are told "that a king who failed to protect his subjects from oppression by robbers or enemies, or under whose rule people starved or women were dishonoured, deserved death in the hands of the people, as if he were a mad dog." cf.

धिक् तस्य जीवितं राज्ञो राष्ट्रे यस्यावसौदति ।
 द्विजोऽन्ती वा मनुषोऽपि गिविराह वचो यथा ॥
 यस्य या विषये राज्ञः स्नातकः सौदति कुधा ।
 अहुदिसेति तदाह॑ विन्दते सह राजकम् ॥ ३०
 कोशन्त्यो यस्य वै राजादियन्ते तरसा चियः ।
 कोशता पतिपुत्रानां मृतोऽसौ न च जीवति ॥ ३१
 अरचितारं हन्तीरं विजीमारमनायकम् ।
 तं वै राजकलि' हन्तुः प्रजाः सबहा निर्वृगम् ॥ ३२
 अहृ वी रचितेत्युक्ता यो न रक्षति भूमिपः ।
 स मंहत्वे निहतव्यः एव सोक्षाद आतुरः ॥ ३३

Anu. ch. 61.

As to instances of deposition of kings, we have in the *Aśvamedha parva*, the account of the deposition of king Khaninetra of Oudh (*Aśva.*, ch. 4). Elsewhere we have accounts of the downfall of the Dandakas (*Dandakānām̄ mahadrājyam̄* *Aurveṇaikeṇa nipiṭitam̄*), the deposition of Arjuna Kārtavīrya, of Aila, and of king Dambhodbhava, who despised and maltreated the brahmans. Some more scattered accounts of deposed tyrants are found, and most of these names of such ill-fated tyrants occur in later literature. But, by far the most important is a traditional list of ill-fated kings as brought destruction on their race

by their sins and in this list we find the names of most of the princes mentioned by Kauṭilya in his chapter on 'Indriyajaya,' (who were not identified by Dr. Shama Sastry). In course of the debate before the Bhārata war, Bhīma mentions them (Ud., 74, 13-17) ch.:—

उद्योग ch. 74. अष्टादशीमे राजानः etc.

ऐच्छिकानामुदावर्ती नौपानां जनसंघयः ।
 वहुलस्तालजहानां क्षमीणामुहती वसुः ।
 अजविन्दुः सुवीरानां सुराइनां रुषहिंकः ।
 अकंजय वक्षीडानां चौनानां धौतमूलकः ॥
 हययोदी विदेहानां वरयुद महोजसाम् ।
 वाहुः सन्दरवेगानां दीपाकाणां पुरुरवाः ।
 सहजवेदिमत्स्यानां प्रवीरानां बृषभजः ।
 धारणवन्द्रवक्षानां मुकुटानां विगाहनः ॥
 गमव नन्दिवेगानामित्येति कुलपांसनाः ।

Only Karāla Vaideha's name mentioned in the Kauṭilya and in Pali tradition, is not in the list. In a chapter of the Mahābhārata, he is described as a pious king discussing the Sāṃkhya doctrine with Pañcasikha, one of the earliest expounders of the system. His name however occurs in the Buddhacarita.²

Other forms of government:—But while we have nothing more about Northern India, we have interesting side-lights on the Yādavas, which enable us to know something of another type of government which existed in the south where that tribe of sturdy fighters ruled. In the days of the great war,

² करालविद्वद्दर्थे व एतम् भारतस्यकाम् ।

प्रवाप लंगमध्ये व नन्द तथाज मन्त्रयनः । *Buddhacarita*, IV, 80.

the Yādavas were not regarded as Kṣatriyas of pure Aryan blood but as Vṛātyas. So said Bhūriśravas to Arjuna who following the advice of Kṛṣṇa had cut off his hands, while he was about to smite his rival Sātyaki.* He reproached Arjuna for following the advice of Kṛṣṇa, and attributed his misdeeds to his connection with the Yādavas, whom he described as not only wicked and perverted by nature but also Vṛātyas. Moreover, it is well-known to all students of the Mahābhārata that there prevailed among them not only marriage with first cousins, but also other customs which did not find place among the true Aryans.

From the Epic, we learn that the Yādavas had a peculiar republican constitution. They were a Confederation of several independent clans and comprised among others the Bhojas, Andhakas, Vṛṣnis, and Kukuras among them. Each clan was ruled by its hereditary chief, but the government of the whole confederation was vested in an assembly of the chiefs who exercised independent local jurisdiction. This assembly was under an officer called Sabbhāpati, who in times of emergency summoned the Yādava princes and Elders to assemble in the Sabbā. (Sabbā-parva ch. 220, 10-13). It was the Sabbhāpati who summoned the Yādavas to arms by beat of drums and communicated to them the tidings of Subhadra's abduction by Arjuna :

The Confederation as a whole, had no king in the ordinary sense of the word but had an elected chief who acted as the President. The affairs of the state were managed by the body of Elders whose voice was supreme. Vāsudeva or Śrīkṛṣṇa, regarded later on as the incarnation of God himself, was one of

* Drona P., chh. 15.

the elders. In ch. 81, sloka 25 of the Śānti Parva, he is described as one of the Saṅgha mukhyas of the Yādava Saṅga and is warned by Nārada to guard against dissensions in the Saṅgha as this was sure to destroy the Confederation. These chiefs, however, seem to have retained autonomous jurisdiction over their own subjects and tribesmen. Their independence is to be inferred from the following passage which describes the chiefs of the Yādavas, Kukuras, and Bhojas as *lokeśvaras* or "rulers of men themselves," cf.

यादवाः कुकुरा भोजा सर्वं चान्यकहत्यायः ।
तयासक्ता महावाहो लोका लोकेश्वराय दे ॥

But, while they retained local jurisdiction and ruling authority, they were not crowned kings in the strict sense of the word. This would appear from sl. 29, ch. XXXVII, of the Sabhā-parva, where, in course of the dispute regarding the *arghya*, the Cedi Śisupāla takes exception to the selection of Śrikṛṣṇa on the ground that he was not worthy of that high honour as he neither came of a royal family (*a-rāja*), nor had ever been crowned king, cf.

लोके दारक्रिया याहृक् अन्ये च रूपदर्शनम् ।
अराज्ञो राज्ञवस् पूजा तथा तंज्ञारिसृदन ॥

Republicanism and Śrī Kṛṣṇa.—Before we conclude our account of the Yādavas, we must say something of Śrikṛṣṇa undoubtedly the central figure in the present version of the Epic narrative. Great as a religious teacher and equally prominent in war and politics, Śrikṛṣṇa today is regarded as an incarnation of the Deity. His political career and teachings as described

in the Epic, show him to be worthy of that reverence, with which India invokes his name and no account of the Mahābhārata politics will be complete, unless we attempt to set forth the main outlines of his policy or the part he played in the political life of contemporary India. Here we summarize his activities during the three important phases of his career :—

(1). By birth, Krṣṇa Vāsudeva was a Vṛṣṇi prince and a scion of the ruling Yādava Kṣattriyas. The efforts of his earlier life were devoted to the destruction of the power of Kāṃsa who had usurped the headship of the Yādavas and was trying to perpetuate absolute power, in league with a number of eastern princes i.e. Jarāsandha and his allies viz. Bhagadatta of Kāmarupa, Vakra of Karuṇa and Puṇḍra Vāsudeva, lord of Vaṅga, Puṇḍra and the Kirātas. This league was joined by some Kṣattriya princes like the Cedi Śiśupāla and Bhiṣmaka and this compelled some of Kṣattriya princes to move westward. The Yādavas like the princes of the Śurasenas, Śalvas, Pāṭacearas, South Pañcāla and East Kośala, had to move and they retired to the fortified city of Kuśasthali, and to Dvāravatī.

(2). After his success against Kāṃsa whom he killed, he set up Kāṃsa's father Ugrasena as the elected President of the confederacy and tried to re-organise the Yādavas. He directed his energies against Jarāsandha (whose daughter Kāṃsa had married) and tried to free India from the consequences of his policy of 'blood and iron.' It was the practice of the latter to uproot all local monarchs and to imprison or slaughter them. He and his allies had thus become a menace to the Kṣattriyas of the west and so Krṣṇa revived the "Kṣattriya League" composed of the Ailas and the Ikṣukus and called upon Yudhiṣṭhira to

perform a Rājasūya, a preliminary step to which would be the overthrow of Jarāsandha. The latter was despatched more by stratagem than force and his son Sahadeva was put on the throne of Magadha.

(3). The last phase of Kṛṣṇa's life was devoted to the settlement of the dispute between the Kauravas and the Pāṇḍavas. He tried his best to win over or persuade Duryodhana to a policy of conciliation but failed. Duryodhana did not only not listen to his counsels of moderation but went so far as to attempt the imprisonment of Kṛṣṇa.

In the Assembly which met on the eve of the Bhārata war, when all efforts at mediation or compromise failed, Kṛṣṇa delivered a number of speeches in which he called upon the Kuru elders to avoid a fratricidal war. His arguments won over most of them to his views, but even then Duryodhana proved obdurate. Thereupon Kṛṣṇa delivered his final address and called upon the Kurus to act on the principle of sacrificing the disturbing elements in the royal family for the general good. He asked them to follow the example of the Yādavas by arresting Duryodhana and his counsellors and thus to restore peace. Udyo, ch. 128.

cf. प्रत्यक्षमेतद्वतां यदव्यामि हिते वचः ।
 भवता मानकृष्णेन यदि रोचेत् भारताः ॥
 भोजराजस्य वृद्धस्य दुराचारोऽनाभवान् ।
 जीवतः पितुरैश्चयैः कृत्वा सूख्यवशं गतः ॥
 उपसेनसुतः कांसः परित्यक्तः स वान्धवै ।
 ज्ञातीणां हितकामिन मया गम्भीर महासृष्टे ॥
 आङ्गकः पुनरस्याभिर्जालिभियापि सत्कृतः ।
 उपसेनः ज्ञाती राजा भोजराज्यस्य वर्देनः ॥

कंसमेकं परित्वच्य कुलार्थं सर्ववादवाः ।
 सम्भूय सुखमेघने भारतान्धकहृष्णयः ॥
 तथा दुर्योधनं कर्णं शकुनिं चापि सीवलं ।
 वहा दुःशासनस्त्रापि पाण्डवेभ्यः प्रयच्छत् ॥
 त्वजेत् कुलार्थं पुरुषं आमस्यार्थं कुलं त्वजेत् ।
 यामं जनयदस्यार्थं आत्मार्थं पृथिवीं त्वजेत् ॥
 राजन् दुर्योधनं वहा ततः संशास्य पाण्डवैः ।
 तत्कारे न विनश्येयुः चत्रियाः चत्रियर्थैः ॥

The Democratic Gaṇas—Next to these limited monarchies, oligarchical confederations and despotic states, we have a large number of Gaṇas the administrative machinery of which is so well described in ch. CVII of the Śāntiparva and which has been so ably explained and interpreted by Mr. Jayawal. We find mention of a large number of these Gaṇas in chapters describing wars or conquests and incidentally we have some real geographical and political data throwing light on the political life of the country.

The more important of these Gaṇas were : —

1. The Yaudheyas.	4. The Audumvaras.
2. The Mālavas.	5. The Vṛṣnis & Andhakas.
3. The Śivas. They are men- tioned along with the Trigartas, Ambaṣṭhas and Mālavas.	6. The Vātadhbhanas. 7. The Mādhyamakeyas. 8. The Trigartas. 9. The Ambaṣṭhas.

For a detailed discussion of Gaṇa government, our readers are referred to the Mahābhārata or the pages of Mr. Jayawal's book. Here we may simply summarise their

leading features, e.g. (a) These Gaṇas were aggregates of kulas and gotras and were dominated by men of the same caste or family (कुलेन सहयाः सर्वे जाता च सहया स्त्रया ॥). They seem moreover to have been democratic bodies.

(b) Sovereignty was vested in the people. All had equal rights and burdens, participated in public matters and bore arms in war.

(c) There was a body of Mukhyas or Gapottamāḥ who ruled these Corporations. All measures required popular approval though on certain matters requiring secrecy, the leaders deliberated in secret and then took public sanction.

Summary of the evidences furnished by the Mahābhārata kernel.—When we summarise the above evidence of the Mahābhārata kernel, we further find that—

(i) In the Yādava country and in the land of the Vābikas a non-monarchical form of government existed. The Yādavas formed a republican Confederacy of small clans, each clan having its hereditary chief, but the affairs of the corporation were entrusted not to one particular hereditary monarch, but to a body of elected Elders or Saṅgha-mukhyas.

(ii) In the secluded nooks and corners or in fastnesses, Gaṇa states existed and in these there were democratic popular constitutions.

(iii) The East, especially the land of Magadha had become the centre of an Imperialistic movement, the nature and character of which was entirely different.

(iv) In the land of the Kurus, Pāṇcālas, Matsyas and most other regions of Madhyadeśa, monarchy of the type described in the Brāhmaṇa literature, was the accepted form of government.

(v) In these states of the Madhyadeśa, the *Sabhā* voiced public opinion. The *Pauras* and *Janapadas* were all-powerful bodies which could not be barred even from talking of the deposition of a *de facto* ruler.

(vi) Ministers though royal servants, relied on public support also. Indeed, *Paura-janapada-priya* is an almost permanent epithet throughout the *Mahābhārata*. One Epic passage is more significant and speaks of a king proclaiming the chosen minister in his *Sabhā* (instance of Kaṅka i.e. Yudhiṣṭhīra in disguise, in the country of Virśū.)

Political Tendencies.—Moreover, the *Mahābhārata* tradition gives us hints as to the main political tendencies of the day. Of these, the two following are worth mention :—

(I) *The Magadha Imperialistic movement* :—This was a new thing in politics. The attempt of Jarāsandha to uproot all monarchs, to put them to death and to unify the whole country was a new departure from old politics. The mention of Magadha is indeed significant. For, as we shall see later on, this was the region where all subsequent empires i.e. those of the Śaisunāgas, Nandas, Mauryas, Guptas, and lastly the Pālas originated.

(II) *The counter-movement of Republicanism* :—Of this the greatest champion was Srikrṣṇa, the Yādava elder. His views and aims have already been given.

Real popular control.—The most important point, which no historian of this Epic fails to observe is that though monarchy was gradually making its advance in the central region, yet the ruler was not as yet irresponsible or free from real popular control. Interferences in matters of succession are significant in themselves and we find such interferences on the part of the people in most cases. In the case of Śāntanu, his father was made

to bow before popular opposition. In the case of his son Bhīṣma, the young prince made his renunciation before the *Sabhā*. In the case of the next generation, Vicitra-vīrya was indeed allowed to become king, but he was exiled on account of his addiction to women, and Bhīṣma was called upon to ascend the throne. Next, Pāṇḍu became the ruler and on abdication handed over power to Dhṛitarāṣṭra. The latter accepted this office and his acceptance being ratified by the people became a real king. The question as to who would be successor gave rise to a difference in the public opinion and two parties were formed, i.e.

(a) One of these regarded Dhṛitarāṣṭra as a true king, on account of his (i) brother's gift (ii) and the subsequent ratification by the people. (b) The other party clearly regarded him as a usurper, and the sentiments of that party were voiced by Bhīṣma.

Though for a time the creation of two different seats postponed a civil war, yet the popularity of the Pāṇḍavas, made Dhṛitarāṣṭra always alive to the dangers of a popular rising.

This peculiar nature of the Kuru constitution is worth noticing. There is monarchy indeed, but the "anointed" was more of a mandatory of the people than an irresponsible tyrant. Indeed, the last words of the old Dhṛitarāṣṭra addressed to the Kuru multitudes reveal to us the real character of the monarchy, when the old king speaks of leaving Yudhiṣṭhira as a "nyāsa" or deposit in the hands of the people and of entrusting Yudhiṣṭhira with the noble duty of protecting the people. Such being the prevailing idea, in all cases of succession to the throne, the people assembled and selected their kings. This has been proved in the case of Śāntanu, Vichitravīrya, Dhṛitarāṣṭra, Parīkṣita, Janamejaya and his successors.

Checks on regal authority.—Furthermore, in the Mahābhārata, we find evidences which confirm some leading features of the political life described in the Brāhmaṇic literature. The limited authority of kings of the Kuru line, the deposition of unrighteous rulers and the constant vigilance on the part of the Pauras and Jānapadas against kingly high-handedness have already been narrated. Next, we pass on to point out some more facts, to show not only this parallelism, but also the existence of some constitutional checks on regal authority. Of these we may mention the following :—

- (1) The constitutional limitations imposed on regal authority, by the king's Coronation Oath.
- (2) Checks on ministers and their moral liability to look to popular interests.
- (3) Existence of the popular element in the Royal Council.
- (4) Prevailing political ideas, which inspite of the influence of sacerdotalism or of paternalism recognized the ultimate sovereignty of the people and regarded the king as the custodian of popular interests who received tribute and allegiance in lieu of righteous rule. The moral right of revolution was also supposed to reside in the people.

The royal oath, at the time of coronation was the most important of the constitutional limitations. In (ch. LIX. of) the Śāntiparvan, we have the traditional account of Vena's deposition by the *Rsis* and the birth and inauguration of Pṛthu and incidentally we have mention of the oath taken by him at the instance of the *Devas* :—*cf.*

स्तमुच्चकावदेवास्ते ते चैव परमव्ययः ।
नियतो यत्र धर्मो वै तमग्रहः समाचर । १०३

.....

प्रतिज्ञाद्वाधिरोहस्त मनसा कमणा गिरा ।
 पालयिथाम्यहं भौमं ब्रह्म इत्येव चासक्तु ॥ १०५
 यथाक्ष धर्मो नित्योक्तो दग्धनोतिव्यपावयः ।
 तमशङ्कः करिष्यति म्लवयो न बदाचन ॥ १०६
 अदग्धामे दिजावेति प्रतिज्ञानोहि हे विभो ।
 लोकच्छ सहरात् लक्ष्मी वाताम्भीति परम्पर ॥ १०८

This oath limited the scope of regal activity to the protection of the people, maintenance of law and order, respect for social privileges and the punishment of wrong-doers only. The importance of this coronation oath imposing obligations on the king is echoed by many parables of the Mahābhārata. To quote one of many such, we find in the story of Nrga (Anuśāsana ch. LXX.), that Yama reminded the king that his punishment was due to his non performance of his Oath of protection (रक्षिताम्भीति चोक्तं ते प्रतिज्ञा चानुत्ता तत्र । व्राद्यपम्भवादानाहित्यधस्तो व्यतिक्रमः ॥२१)

Other limitations existed, *rīz.*, the king's subservience to the laws equally with his subjects, his inability to impose extra taxes at will and his obligation to carry out the duties entrusted to him. As the Sānti-parva expressly says (ch. LXXXVII—26-33) extra taxes could be imposed only with popular sanction.

Ministers.—Next to the oath, there was the activity of the ministers and the weight of public opinion expressed in the Sabhā, which on important occasions the elders and prominent men of all castes attended. We find even women of position like Kuntī and Gāndhārī giving their advice. Ministers though royal servants were morally responsible to the people. Pre-eminent among the minister-advisers was the Purohita, who

according to the Śāntiparva shared with the king his functions and merits (तस्य धर्मस्य सर्वस्य भागी राजपुरोऽहितः । LXXII. 18.) Then came the Brāhmaṇa advisers, whose opinion had a great weight in as much as their position and life was safe-guarded by their immunities. The position of the Purohita would appear from the pre-eminence of Vaśiṣṭha in the administration of Ayodhyā after Daśaratha's death and even of Dhaumya (a man of less repute and wanting in strong personality) who is entrusted with the regency and the safety of the capital along with Yuyutṣu in the Āśramavāśika parva.⁹ (युद्धसुख महातेजा धोम्यवैव पुरोऽहितः । युधिष्ठिरस्य वचनात् पुरुषसि प्रकक्तुः ॥ XXIII. 15 Duryodhana also consulted his priests whenever he wanted to raise money.

Caste representation in the Council.—Not to speak of the influence of the Brāhmaṇas, the weight of the ministerial council was augmented by the presence of ministers of other castes who represented the opinion of their respective social groups. The chapters of the Rājadharma speak of eight mantriṇah (not specified by name, but including, the Śuklāmātya, Senuṣpati, Pratibhāra, Śirorakṣa, Dūta and Sāndhibivigrahika, See Śānti Ch. LXXXV.) and specifically mentions in addition, the Council of Amātyas comprising four Brahmins, eight Kṣatriyas, twenty-one Vaiśyas, three Śūdras and one Sūta. *cf.*

वच्चामि तु यद्यामातगान् याहृशांच करिस्यसि । ५
 चतुरो ब्राह्मणान् वैद्यान् प्रगल्भान् आतकान् शूचीन् ।
 चक्रियांच तथा चाष्टौ वज्ञिनः ग्रसपालिनः ॥६
 देश्यान् विजेन मध्यद्वानेकविंशतिसंस्थया ।
 त्रींच शूद्रान् विनोतांच शूचीन् कर्मणि पूर्वके ॥७
 अष्टाभिष गुणेयूक्तं सूतं पौराणिकं तथा ।

⁹ See N. Law, Hindu Polity pp. 27, Ch. on the State Council.

The relation between the two bodies is rather meagre, but evidently, the consultation was made with the eight mantriṇah and then the proposed measures were given out to the Council for opinion (चष्टानां मन्त्रिणां मध्ये मन्त्र राजोपधारयेत् । ततः सम्मेष्येद्वाऽर्थे राजैयाय च दग्धयेत् ॥). The reference to Śūdra ministers should not be regarded merely as an instance of idealism but it was a fact since we find caste representatives already in the Brāhmaṇas in connection with all the inaugural ceremonies. The Mahābhārata gives us instances of ministers of lower caste like Vidura, and Yuyutsu. Not to speak of ministers of lower caste, any one maintaining order and protecting life and property was allowed due reverence. (शुद्धो वा यदि वाऽप्यन्यः सर्वथा मानमहति । 38—LXXVIII. Śanti.)

They were morally liable for giving right advice to the king (if we are to believe in the Epic evidence). Various causes and circumstances stood in the way of the growth of a legal responsibility in such an early period but inspite of this, the prevailing political ideas fastened moral responsibility on the ministers and this appears from passages the meaning of which is very clear. In one place, we are told that unrighteous ministers go to hell and in another, it is laid down that they deserve death in the hands of the people (कार्यविकलताः सम्बगकुवैत्तो दृपानुगाः । आत्मानं पुरतः क्षत्ता यास्त्वधः सङ्गतिविवाः ॥ 17—cf. LXXXV, Śanti; and असत्यापिष्ठसचिवी वज्ञो लौकस्य धर्मदा ॥). There are evidences to prove that ministers who were appointed by the kings were sometimes proclaimed to the people (c/. the account of Virāṭa's proclamation of Yudbiṣṭhira in his Sabha).

This simpler state of political life and the popular character of monarchy thus receives ample confirmation from the tradition of the Epic kernel. We have seen how limited the

authority of kings was in those days ; how they always feared the anger of their subjects and how government though vested in the king depended mainly on the opinion of the people. The states were small and the various popular bodies were efficient in checking royal high-handedness. The Assemblies of the city or of the country remained active and always imposed their will on their rulers. This state of affairs will receive some more confirmation if we analyse the prevailing political ideas of those days. The idea of a contract subsisting between the ruler and the ruled, the conception of kings as guardians of the public interest, the belief that the tax paid to the king was but his wages, all go to prove the existence of popular sovereignty and of limited monarchy. For the present, however, we refrain from any detailed discussion of these, since, the ideas found in the Rāja-dharma chapters are mingled with some others which belong to a later age. The super-position of varied strata of thought and speculation stand in the way of utilising this material with reference to this period. We reserve a fuller discussion of these for the next chapter, in which we shall enter into an analysis of the political condition which preceded the gradual decay of popular sovereignty and the rise of pure monarchy.

Rāmāyanic Evidence

THE picture of political conditions furnished by the Rāmāyaṇa is absolutely the same as we get in the Epic kernel, the former depicting rather a more primitive political life. Ayodhyā was like the Kuru kingdom, a monarchy ruled by the Aikṣāka princes with whom the royal office was hereditary. But inspite of this, the rulers were far from being irresponsible. They depended on the advice and counsel of their Purohitas and Amātyas, and on all important occasions, the popular bodies exercised their rights. The Pauras, the Jānapadas, and the leaders of castes and guilds were potent factors in the administrative system. Their voice was supreme and the king was bound to take their advice on all important affairs of state. The Rājakṛts or king-makers who are repeatedly mentioned in the Atharva Veda and the Brāhmaṇas figure prominently in the Rāmāyaṇa. We have innumerable instances to prove the truth of the above statements. Thus, we find Daśaratha consulting his subjects i.e. the Brāhmaṇas, Bala-mukhyas, Pauras and Jānapadas (Ayo. II. 19-20 वा॒ष्मा॒ बलमुख्याश्च॑ पौरजापदेः॑ मत्त॑) before coming to a decision about the Yauvarājya of Rāma (Ayo. ch. IV.). We find them all eagerly awaiting the Yauvarājya of Rāma (Ayo. ch. XIV-XV) and on the death of the king, they gathered with a view to the restoration of order in the kingdom, at the instance of the sage Vaśiṣṭha (Ayo. ch. LXXXI). Again, the Naigamāḥ and Nāgarikāḥ accompanied Bharata in his mission to find Rāma

(Ayo. LXXXII) and they called upon him to assume kingship (Ayo CXI). Finally, when Rāma returned from the war victorious, the people e.g. the Pauras, Jāmapadas, the Śreni-mukhyas and the Elders welcomed him. (Lankā. ch. CXXIX).

While these instances show popular participation in all important affairs of state, some more may be cited to show the amount of authority they exercised. From these it would be clear, that it was within their rights to expel wicked princes, to fill up the throne if there were any vacancy caused by abnormal circumstances, or to appoint a Regent to fill the throne.

Of the expulsion of a wicked prince at the instance of the people, we have the story of the exile of Asamāñjāh (see Bāla. XXXVIII). The full story of his expulsion is given in the XXXVIth chapter of the Ayodhyā-kāṇḍa where the Mahāmātra Siddhārtha gives a true account in order to refute the views of Kaikeyī that the king could expel his eldest son if he so wished. The true cause of Asamāñja's banishment was that, the prince used to drown the children of his father's subjects in the Sarayu. Hence the people asked the king to punish him and the latter following their advice discarded him. cf.

असमचो रहीत्वा तु क्रोडनः परि दारकान् ।
सरयुं प्रचिपन्नप्सु रमते तेन दुष्टिः ।
ते हृषा नागराः सर्वं कुहा राजानमवैत् ।
असमच्च द्वगोद्यै कमसान् वा राङ्गवैनः ॥
स तामो वचः चुत्वा प्रकृतीनां नराधिषः ।
ते त्वत्वाजाहितं पुर्वं तामां पियत्विकोदया ॥

As to an instance of the election of a king by the people, we have the account of the election of Amśumān, who was raised

to the throne by the people on the death of his predecessor Sagara. cf.

कालधर्मेन्द्रते राम सगरे प्रकृतीं जनाः ।
राजानं रोचयामासुरं यमनं सुधार्मिकम् ।

The election of a king was thus evidently within their powers and we find that on the death of Daśaratha, while Bharata was absent, some of the Rājakartārah proposed the election of any other Aikṣaku prince to the throne. cf.

ममेत्य राजकर्त्तरः सभामौयुद्धिं जातयः ॥ २
इत्था कूणामिहादेव कथिद्वाचा विधीयतःम् ॥
अराजकं हि नो राष्ट्रं विनाशं समवाप्न्यात् ॥ ३

Of these proposals, one is indeed very interesting i.e. Vasiṣṭha's resolution to place Sītā on the vacant throne of her exiled husband. cf.

अनुष्ठासनति रामस्त्रं मोतः प्रकृतमाभनम् । २६
आत्मा च दारा: भवेषां दारसंयहयर्जिणाम् ।
आत्मेयमिति रामस्य धातयिष्यति मेदिनोम् ॥ २८

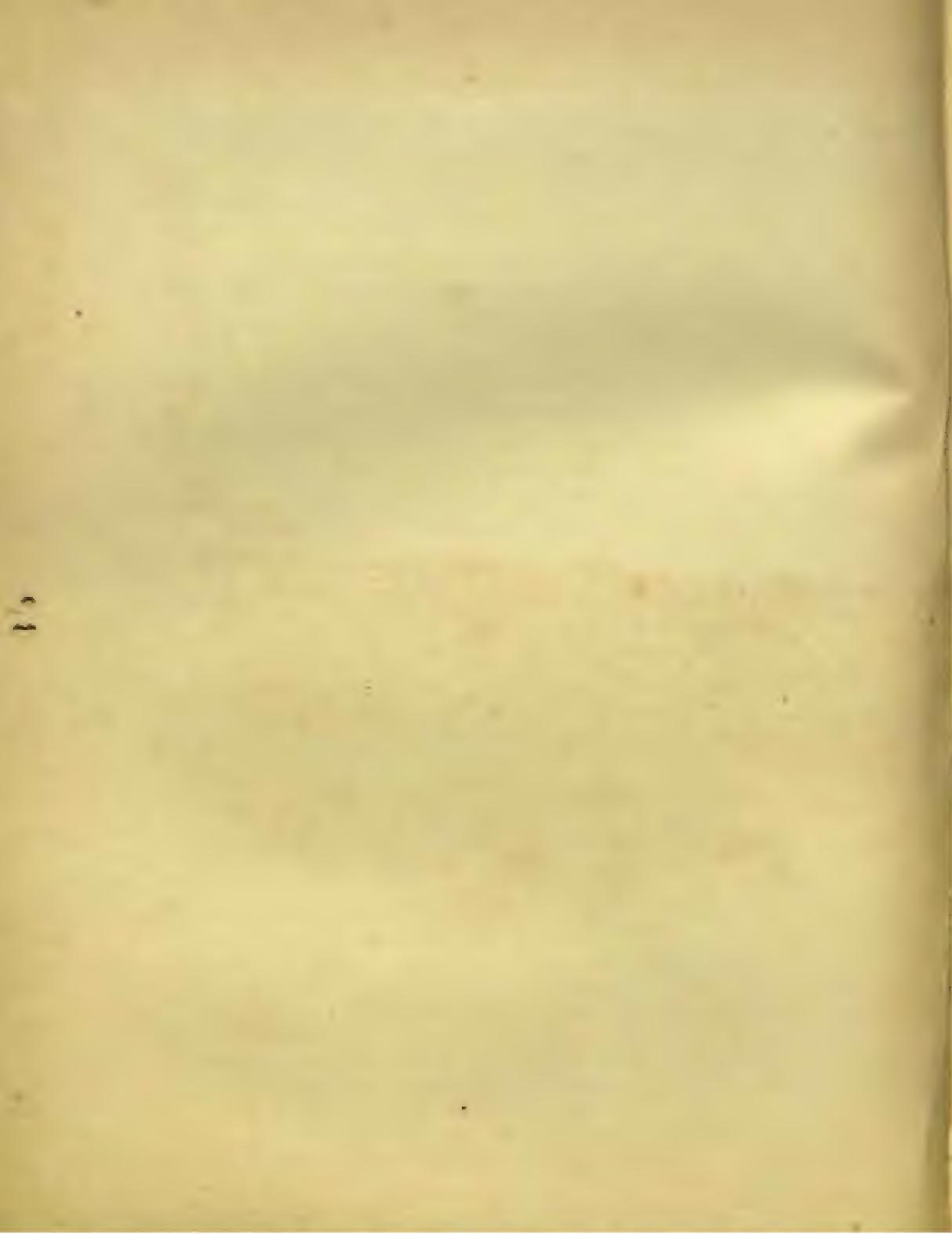
The people thus were everything; the Rājakartārah wielded immense influence and royalty depended on the good-will of the subjects.

NOTE.—This picture of Epic political life marks the transition from primitive polity to the limited constitutional monarchies preceding the Imperial movement of later ages. It is characterised by popular sovereignty and the subservience of monarchy to popular opinion. Kings had not as yet freed themselves from popular control. The states were small and they can be compared favourably with the city states of Greece or Italy in the Vth or VIth century B.C. or even earlier. Effective checks on royalty existed. First

of all, there were the Kṣattriya kinsmen of the king who formed the fighting militia and then there were the priestly classes whose social immunities placed them at a great advantage. The common people too had their guilds or associations and they asserted their opinion on all important questions of the day.

The primitive character of the Mahābhārata polity ought to be taken into account in discussing the date of the present reduction of the great historical work. European scholars are as a rule disposed to regard the whole Mahābhārata as a late production, simply because they find mention of a few words in the Epic like the *Dīnbra* (*Harivimśa*) or some tribe-names like the *Sakas*, *Pahlavas*, *Yavanas*, *Cinas* or *Tugaras*. The occurrence of these words show indeed, a later handling but they do not prove that the whole Parva or chapter containing the word was composed during a late period. The most reasonable view should be to hold that these words crept in through a late writer or scribe, who interpolated the political and geographical data of his own age, to complete the narratives and descriptions of the Epic chapters. The simple political life of the Epic is sufficient to prove its antiquity, for in a later age, when popular government was a thing of the past no one would have strained his imagination to impose a character of antiquity on the picture of contemporary political life.

One of the earliest to recognize the popular character of the Epic polity is Dr. Washburn Hopkins, whose valuable contributions on the Epic are too well known to be mentioned here. He has tried to prove the democratic character of the Kuru state and has recognized the importance of the people in the administration. He has also emphasised upon the point that the people chose their kings and participated in royal coronations and thereby ratified their election. He has also discussed the importance of the *Sabha* (Ger. *Sippe*). His views are summarised in his article on "The position of the ruling caste in India." See Journal of the American Oriental Society Vol. XIII, pp. 57-372.



Political Divisions

Monarchies and Republics

FROM the Epic account of political life in the later Vedic age, we pass on to the political evolution during the period elapsing from the close of the Vedic age to the sixth cen. B. C., which saw the beginning of that great movement culminating in the union of the whole of Northern India into a powerful Empire.

The history of the period yet remains obscure. We have neither proper land-marks separating it from the later Vedic Age, nor clear records stating the succession of dynasties or the unbroken chronological relation of princes to their successors or predecessors. While we lack such a connected and systematic chronological account, the material at our disposal is not insufficient for a study of the political evolution during this period.

The chief evidence at our disposal is that furnished by the Brāhmaṇic sūtras and the Upaniṣads which comprise older traditions, together with those of a subsequent age. Of the sūtras, those of Pāṇini the grammarian are of great importance and throw light on the contemporary geographical and political divisions of the country. The next great sources of evidence on the period are those furnished by the canonical literature of the Buddhists, of which we have but a late redaction, the folklore of the post-vedic period preserved in the form of the Jatāka stories by the Buddhist monks who utilised them for the

teaching of the laity, the dynastic lists though perverted and distorted, preserved in the Purāṇas and the picture of social and political life in the Dharmasūtras which we may take to be Pre-kauṭilyan if not entirely Pre-Buddhistic. As the result of a careful study, we can glean many important historical facts and these enable us to attempt a picture of political evolution during this long and dark period.

The bulk of geographical data is mainly obtainable from the chapters of Pāṇini dealing with suffixes (*taddhita*) which are added to place or tribe names.* Pāṇini, who clearly appears to have been a native of the modern Peshwar district, is more familiar with the North-Western regions of India, than the countries and divisions of the extreme East or South.†

But, by far, more interesting light is thrown by some of his Sūtras in which Pāṇini mentions the existence of Saṅghas and the political Corporations of fighting people (*ayudhajīvit Saṅghas*).

* The exact date of Pāṇini is yet to be found out. In earlier pages we have simply accepted the views of Goldstucker which was supported by the late Dr. Sir R. G. Bhandarkar. The accepted date of VIIIth cen. B.C. nearly approaches the truth. Pāṇini was certainly not familiar with Buddhism, but seems to have been acquainted with some of the earlier wandering sects. Here again, a great difficulty arises, since, monkish writers have introduced confusion by making the founders of these sects synchronous with the founder of their religion, with a view to narrate the defeat of the former by their own teacher.

† Of the extreme westerly regions, we find mention of Kāmvoja (IV. 1. 175), Gandhara (IV. 1. 199), the Sindhu region (IV. 3. 93), Takṣashila (IV. 3. 93), the Vāhikas (V. 3. 114, IV. 2. 117), the Madras (IV. 2. 131 and 108), the Trigartas (IV. 1. 111; V. 3. 116), the Sanviras (IV. 1. 148, IV. 2. 76) and Kapisa (IV. 2. 99).

Of the Central regions, the following appear in his sūtras prominently e.g. the Kūfuś (IV. 1. 176, 172), Sālyas (IV. 1. 169), Kodala (IV. 1. 171), Kāśi (IV. 2. 116), Uṣṇarā (IV. 2. 118) and Yugandhara (IV. 1. 173).

Of Eastern countries, he mentions Magadha (IV. 1. 170), Kaliṅga (IV. 1. 170), the Vṛjl (IV. 2. 131), while in connection with the South he mentions Kacchā (IV. 2. 126 and 133) Avanti (IV. 1. 176), Assaka (IV. 1. 173), the Añdhakas and the Vṛṣpi (IV. 1. 114).

IV. 3. 91). He specifically notes the Vāhikas, the Yaudheyas and the Andhaka-Vṛṇis (V. iii. 113—117 and V. I. 21). Details about the method of government in these states are not known, with the exception that some of them were ruled by local saṅghas or republican corporations, the rest remaining under kings, since there is no evidence to the contrary. Fuller information, though of the nature of legends is obtainable from the early Pāli suttas which are supposed to retain the sayings of the Buddha and thus to describe a state of affairs contemporary with that great teacher. More details of the same nature are preserved in the Jātakas, but how far they are reliable is yet to be decided, since, according to many eminent Buddhist scholars they bear the stamp of subsequent handling and modification.

As pointed out by the late Prof. Rhys Davids the Buddhist canonical literature represented by the Aṅguttara Nikāya, as well as some of the Jātakas repeatedly speak of the "Solasa Mahajanapadāni" or the sixteen states. Probably, this is an echo of the state of affairs which existed long prior to the VIth century. The sixteen states are as follows :—

1. Kāsi	9. Kuru
2. Kosala	10. Pañcāla
3. Aṅga	11. Maccha (Matsya)
4. Magadha	12. Sūrasena
5. Vajji	13. Assaka (or Aśmaka)
6. Malla	14. Avanti
7. Ceti (Cedi)	15. Gandhāra
8. Vamsa (Vatsa)	16. Kamboja

This list of states however, should not be regarded as exhaustive. The Jains who seem to have been familiar with

other parts of India vary this list of sixteen states and mention Vaṅga, Malaya, Mālava, Aceha, Koccha (Kaccha), Lāḍha (Rāḍha), and Sambhuttala (Suhma). This list of the Bhagavatī-sutta is thus very suggestive, since the existence of some of the kingdoms not occurring in the Buddhist stock-list is proved by occasional references to them in the Canon. Vaṅga thus appears in the compound Vaṅgantaputta, an epithet applied to the sage Upasena. Some of the Epic chapters mention Vaṅga, Aṅga, Kāmarupa and Suhma, though in many accounts the princes of these regions are described as Mlecchas. The existence of Kaliṅga, Bharu (Jāt. 213) and the settlement of Dantapura is proved by the evidence of the Buddhist canon. The oldest Buddhist commentaries, the Mahāniddesa and Cullaniddesa throw more light and mention Tamali (Tamluk, proving the existence of Suhma), Bharukaccha and various other regions, which were already in existence for a long time undoubtedly. Then, there were the non-Aryan Yakṣa states mentioned in the Buddhist books and prominent of these was the state of Ālavi.

With the exception of some states on the western and the eastern fringe which were republics, by far the larger number of those mentioned above were ruled by kings. Some of these kingdoms again were very old and their existence has been traced in the Vedic hymns or the Brāhmaṇas. Here we give concise accounts of the political changes that took place in them :—

The Kuru kingdom :—The Kuru kingdom, which once held the premier place among the Aryan states, evidently declined. But, the tradition of the Kuras was continued and we find references to Princes of Yudhiṣṭhira gotra (Yudhiṣṭhila-gotta) ruling in Indraprastha (Indapattha—*see* Jāts. 276, 413, 515, etc.). Two princes e.g. Dhanañjaya and Sutasoma, are mentioned

by name and the name of the Epic adviser Vidura also appears. The tradition of the righteousness of the Kuru Kings appears in the Kurudharma Jātaka, where the king, his mother, the Queen, the Purohita, the Rajju-grābaka, the Amātya, the Śreṣṭhi, the Drona-māpaka, the Mahāmātra and even the Gaṇikā are all described as performing Kurudharma. This shows that inspite of the decay of the Kurus, their past greatness and righteous conduct made their name hallowed and in the Jātaka alluded to, we find the king of Kaliṅga asking his advice as to the ways of warding off a famine. Probably, the country was split up in to a number of principalities, and its greatness was lost. The Jains mention a line of Kurus ruling at Isukāra (S. B. E. XLV. 62.)

The Kāsi Kingdom—The kingdom of Kāsi, existed as an independent country prior to the VIth century, when it was absorbed by Kośala. Its kings even aspired to the position of Emperors (Mahāvagga. X. 2. 3.), but evidence shows its gradual decay. The kings of Kośala who were once insignificant compared with those of Kāsi, waged a continuous war against the latter. (see Jāt. 151 Rājāvavāda, also nos. 282, 428, 536). According to some Jātakas (336) and the Mahāvagga, Kośala was even once a part of Kāsi, and according to another Jātaka, (no. 207) the Kāsi king had made even the king of Potali as his tributary. The older line of Kāsi kings came to be supplanted by another dynasty of kings who took the title of Brahmadatta. These kings are repeatedly mentioned in the Jātakas. The Matsya Purāṇa (Ch. 271) and the Mahābhārata (Sabbā VIII. 22) mention one hundred Brahmadattas (H. Dev. in Car. Lec. I.)

Later on, the kings of Kośala became powerful and annexed Kāsi. In the Vaḍḍhaki-sūkara Jātaka, we find the grant of Kāsigāma by Mahākośala to his daughter Kośala-devī on her

marriage as "bath and perfume money" (*mahākosala duhitaram* Kosaladevīm dadamāno tassa nabāpana-cunnamulamp etc. Jāt. 283). According to some tradition in the Buddhist Canonical literature, these attacks on Kāsi were made by Vañka, Dabbasena and Kampa, the last named being the actual conqueror (Bud. Ind. p. 25; Vin. I. 342; also Jātakas already referred to).

Pañcāla.—The history of Pañcāla from the Bhārata war to the seventh cen. B.C. is rather obscure. According to the Vāyu Purāṇa, twentyfive kings ruled till the rise of Magadha imperialism but names and details are rather scanty. The Jātaka tradition, too, does not come to our help in clearing this obscure period. The Jātakas merely preserve traditions relating to the struggle between the Kurus and the Pañcālas for the possession of North Pañcāla. According to some Jātakas, Uttara Pañcāla was part of the Kuru kingdom while according to others it was an independent unit with capital at Kāmpilya (see Jāts. 323, 408, 513 and 520). Of Pañcāla kings, we have the names of Durmukha (see Jāt. 408 and 541) with his capital at Kāmpilya and he is made a contemporary with Karanḍu of Kaliṅga and Nimi of Videha. Another prince named Brahmadatta Culina is mentioned in the (Jāt. 546, Utt. Sūtra; Rāmāyaṇa I. 33; see H. C. Ray Chaudhury P. H.—p. 70.)

The Vāyu Purāṇa simply makes the statement that twenty-five Pañcāla kings reigned, probably before the rise of the Magadha Emperors.

The Kingdom of Kośala.—Kośala remained for a long time under the Aikṣvākus. About thirty kings of this line from Brhadbala, contemporary of the Great war ruled in Kośala and with these princes the Śākyas claimed kinship. Its earliest capital was Ayodhyā; thence the seat was transferred to Sāketa

and lastly to Śrāvasti. Śrāvasti was one of the great cities of North India in the VIIth century B.C.

The family of Mahākosala who became predominant, ruled over an extensive territory including the Kāsi kingdom and the territory of the Śākyas. The Kośala kings of this line were powerful rulers and granted a large number of villages to learned Brāhmaṇa *mahāśālas*, who held them on condition of teaching, study and spiritual service. In the sixth century B.C. the ruler was Prasenajit, the brother-in-law of the Magadha king Bimbisāra. He was a pious ruler and frequently visited the Buddha. He was in his eighteenth year when he was deposed by his son Viruḍhaka the child of Vāsava-khattiyā, with the assistance of the unscrupulous Dīgha-kārāyana. It was in the reign of the latter that Kośala declined and was annexed to Magadha.

The Kingdom of Magadha :—This kingdom remained under the Bārhadrathas. According to the Viṣṇu, the last Bārhadrartha was killed by Sunika his minister, and with him began the Pradyota dynasty, which with five kings ruled for 138 years (?) This was supplanted according to the Purāṇas by the Śaisunāgas (this is not supported by Ceylonese tradition). Fourth in descent from Śisūnāga was Bimbisāra, who appears to have been an elder contemporary of the Buddha. Under him and his son Ajātāśatru, as we shall see the Magadha monarchy was launched into a career of imperialism. Its rulers conquered the adjacent kingdom of Aṅga and Bimbisāra by his marriage with Kośala-devī (Mahākosala's daughter) received the kingdom of Kāsi as her pin-money. Magadha gradually became the greatest of Indian principalities and it came to possess a standing army of immense strength. In the next chapter we shall relate the story of the unification of Northern India by the Magadha kings.

Kingdom of Aṅga :—This kingdom of which we find an earlier reference in the Brāhmaṇas, had its capital at Campā otherwise known as Mālinī. In the Vāyu (Ch. 99.) and the Matsya Purāṇas, we have a dynastic list of its princes but the names cannot be verified owing to lack of details from other sources. The Buddhist texts mention Queen Gaggarā of Campā who built a great lake. The Jains mention a king Dadhvishana, his daughter Candanā and the invasion of Campā by the king of Kauśambi. Aṅga was once a powerful kingdom and if we believe in the testimony of some Jātakas, it once extended its sway over Magadha, since the Vidhura-Paṇḍita Jātaka speaks of Rājagrīha as a city of Aṅga. Another Jātaka (Gūtha-prāna), however speaks of the two as being adjacent countries. Probably, in the middle of the VIIth cen. B.C. Aṅga was annexed to Magadha. It was conquered by Bimbisāra Śrenika, the son of Bhaṭṭiya but the city of Campā retained its prosperity even in the days of Buddha. (N. Dey.—J. A. S. B. 1914.)

The Kingdom of Videha :—This kingdom founded by the Ikṣvākus attained great prosperity. According to the Purāṇas, it came to be called by the name of Mithilā after Mithi. The Purāṇas furnish a long list of the Janakas of Mithilā. Probably Nimi took the title of Janaka. Twenty-first in descent from him was Śradhvaja whose daughter Sītā was the wife of Rāma. The last king of the line was thirty-eighth in descent from the founder and his name was Kṛti. The names of the kings in the dynastic lists in the Vāyu (ch. 89) and the Viṣṇu (IV. 5.) substantially agree, but they do not occur in the Brāhmaṇas, with the exception of a Janaka who is described in the Śatapatha as a Samrāṭ. The Bṛhadāraṇyaka Up. mentions one Janaka prominently and he figures as a philosopher-king.

whose court was frequented by Kuru-pāñcāla Brahmins prominent among whom was the celebrated Yājñavalkya.

Though details are lacking, the long line of the Janakas and their political and intellectual superiority is testified to by tradition. Their names are preserved in folklore and as such, a number of Janakas figure in the Jātakas. We hear of Makbādeva Janaka (*see* Niśi Jāt.; Majjhima N. II. 74-83) and Mahā-janaka. (Jāt. no. 559; *see* Bud. Ind. p. 26). Some Janakas figure in Jain tradition. When and how the Janaka line ended is difficult to determine, but the disruption of the kingdom took place before the rise of Jainism and Buddhism. The country once under the sway of the kings of Mithilā, seem to have come under a number of clans, who had evidently asserted themselves on the break-up of the monarchy of the Janakas. These clans were organised into two prominent non-monarchical federations e.g. the Vajjis and the Mallas. Their leagues were organised in order to repel the aggression of neighbouring kings.

The Vajji and Malla :—The Vajjis comprised eight clans, (eight kulas) prominent of whom were the Videhas with Mithilā (mod. Janakpur) as their capital, the Licchavis of Vaiśāli (mod. Besarh), Vajjis proper and the Jñātrikas with their headquarters at Vaiśāli. Other clans existed in the locality and they included the Bhaggas of Sumsumāra, Bulis of Allakappa, Kālmas of Kesaputta, Koliyas of Rāmagūma, Sākiyas of Kapilavastu and the Moriyas of Pippalivana.

The names of these clans remain inseparably connected with the early history of the Jain and Buddhist religions. Buddha was the son of Rajā Śuddhodana of Kapilavastu, while the Jñātrikas produced Siddhārtha and Mahāvīra.

The ruling members of these clans seem to have been Kṣatriyas and Aikṣvākus. This is proved not only by their own claims, but by the evidence of the Rāmāyaṇa, the Purāṇas, and of later Brāhmaṇical tradition. The Rāmāyaṇa preserves the tradition of the Vaiśāla kings being descended from Viśāla son of Ikṣvāku, while two Purāṇas i.e. Vāyu (ch. 86) and Viṣṇu (IV. 1) trace the royal line from Nābhūka, brother of Ikṣvāku.

The Mallas had a similar confederation, though they seem to have been originally under a monarchical constitution. The Jains speak of nine Malla princes banded in a league. Their important strong-holds were at Pāvā and Kusinārā.

The Kingdom of Vatsa :—It was a kingdom with capital at Kausāmbī. The ruling family belonged to a branch of the Bhāratas. The name Vatsa was derived from the conquest of the region round Kausāmbī by Vatsa son of Pratardana, king of Kāsi (for this war against the Vitahavyas and the mention of Vatsa see Mahā. Anusā ch. 30). According to the Purāṇas, the Kuru line was transferred to Kausāmbī at the time of Nicakṣu. Probably, in this same line flourished king Udayana, the hero of a cycle of so many legends, who was contemporary with Bimbisāra and Caṇḍa Pradyota of Avanti. The Vatsas in the VIth century were powerful kings and extended their power over the Bhaggas of Sompumāra hill (Car. Lec. P. 63; Jat. no. 353).

Matsya :—The history of the Matsya kingdom about the VIth century is very obscure. Probably, it had been annexed to some other powerful kingdom. In the Epic, we have repeated mention of the Matsya country (Sabbā 30) and king Virāṭa is a conspicuous figure. In the Epic, as also in later literature the customs and manners of the Matsyas are praised.

The Kingdom of Aśmaka :—The kingdom of Aśmaka lay in the south, on the bank of the Godāvarī, along with the sister kingdom of Mūlaka. A Vāyu Purāṇa tradition attributes the origin of the princes of Aśmaka and Mūlaka, to the Ikṣvāku line. Nothing more is recorded in Brāhmaṇical literature. According to the evidence of the Buddhist literature, the capital of Aśmaka was Potana or Potali (for further details see Car. Lec. I. P. 53-54).

Avanti :—It became a powerful kingdom in the sixth and seventh centuries B. C. The early history of this kingdom is obscure. The Mahābhārata and the Purāṇas seem to distinguish between two kingdoms with capitals at Ujjayini and Māhiṣmatī. Māhiṣmatī was ruled by the Haihaya Yādavas who conquered the Nāgas. Kārttavīrya was a great conqueror. In the Epic, (Sabhā. ch. 31) we find that Nīla the king of Māhiṣmatī was conquered by Sahadeva. Avanti according to the Matsya Purāṇa probably owed its name to Avanti a son of Kārttavīrya (ch 43). In the Epic, Avanti was under two joint rulers Vinda and Anuvinda. The later history of these kingdoms, just preceding the sixth century is obscure. Probably, after the fall of the older line, the dynasty of Pradyota took its place. Pradyota was a powerful king, the rival and later on the father-in-law of Udayana. He figures prominently in the Buddhist tradition and was contemporaneous with the founder of the Buddhist religion.

Kaliṅga :—The kingdom of Kaliṅga came to be established before the seventh century B. C. The Canonical tradition mentions Dantapura on the Kaliṅga coast and the Kaliṅgāraṇī. The Jātakas mention king Karanḍu. The Epic, mentions Kaliṅga and its prince Ketumān who fought on the side of Duryodhana.

Gandhāra :—The kingdom of Gandhāra seems to have retained its existence, though we have no details about its

ruling dynasty. The Mahābhārata mentions Gandhāra kings like Subala the father of Gāndhārī or his son Śakuni who played so important a part in the history of the Bhārata war. Several Jātakas preserve details of traditional history of Gandhāra. Takṣaśilā its capital, is mentioned in the Epic and figures prominently in the Jātakas which describe it as a great educational centre and the home of learned Ācāryas, frequented by students from Eastern and central India. The Kumbhakāra Jātaka preserves the tradition of the Gandhāra king Nagnajit (Sat. Br. VII. 1. 4. 10) whose name occurs in the Prākṛt form as Naggaji. The jains too, mention him as a historical person and describe him as one of the earliest converts to their religion.

Kamboja :—Kamboja, which is hardly described as an independent kingdom in Vedic literature, was another principality on the north western frontier, situated closely to Gandhāra. The Epic mentions it repeatedly. It was conquered by Arjuna along with the Dāradas. (Sabhā. ch. 17) and again by Karṇa on behalf of Duryodhana and seems to have had its capital at Rājapura (Drona. ch. IV.). In the Epic, the productions of Kamboja e.g. woolen textiles and horses are mentioned in more than one place. The Jātakas mention Kamboja in more than one place and in one Jātaka (Jāt. no. 543.), the savage customs of the Kambojas are denounced.

Other states and tribes :—The above is a list only of the more important kingdoms and ought not to be regarded as exhaustive. For, in the Epic, we find in addition to these a large number of kingdoms or independent republican tribes. The chapters describing the conquests of Yudhiṣṭhīra, in connection with his Rājasūya (Sabhā. Ch. 25-32), his Aśvamedha

(Ch. 73-83) and the conquests of Karṇa on behalf of Duryodhana (*see* Vana. ch. 253; Drona. Ch. 4) are full of important geographical data. Unfortunately however these chapters are often full of anachronism and show so clear evidence of later additions, that in the opinion of European scholars, it would but justify the utter rejection of their evidence. But, in spite of this, it must be admitted that they show the utilisation of older materials and the existence many of the tribes or states is confirmed by later literature. Here we mention some of the more prominent of these :—

In the north-western region, there were—Kaṣmīra, various local *Gāṇas*, Daradas, Abhisāra, Kāmbojā, Uttara Kāmbojā, Hāṭaka, and Uttara-kuru ; in the central region, Daśārtha, Śālva, Yugandhara ; in the East—Malla, Vatsa-bhūmi, Bharga, Niṣāda, Pundra, Vaṅga, Tāmralipta, Suhma, Pra-subha, Piṅgijyotiṣa.

In the south, there were the Apara Matsyas, Pataccaras, Niṣāda tribes in *Gāṇas*, Avanti under dual kings, the Bhoja Confederation, South and Eastern Kosalas, Kaliṅga, the Pulindas, Māhiṣmati, Surāṣṭra, Bhojākaṭaka, Bharukaccha, Kaccha, Daṇḍaka, Andhra, Pāṇḍya, Kerala and the various Mleechas peoples living on the coast.

In the border region on the west, along the Indus, there were a large number of republican *Gāṇas* e.g. the Sibis, Trigartas (elsewhere they are described as being under king Suśarmas), Ambaṣṭhas, Mālavas, Kṣudraka-mālavas, Mādhyamakeyas and Vāṭadhanas (Brāhmaṇa *Gāṇas*), Andumbaras, the Śūdras and Ābhīras on the Sarasvati, the Grāmaniyāḥ of Sindhu, the Sauvīras.*

* It is difficult to ascertain exactly the period in which these states or tribes came into existence. The Epic evidence loses much of its value from the fact that later additions were made to the older chronological and geographical data. The evidence of the Jātaka tradition or that of the Buddhist Canonical literature suffers from the

As we have seen already, with the influence of various political causes, monarchy had been gaining ground in the central region. In the outlying regions, republics continued to exist.

Regal Administration :—In the monarchical states, real political allegiance had fairly developed and displaced the older tribal bond. The sole executive authority was vested in the king who was the protector of all his subjects irrespective of caste or birth. He was the head of the state, collected taxes and tributes, administered justice, fought against foreign enemies and looked to the material welfare of his subjects. Evidences as to the functions of royalty and the way of their exercise by kings is

same defects. The account of the Maha-janapadas belongs undoubtedly to a very early period which we may take to have been pre-Buddhistic. But, in regard to some more data found in the Canon or the Jātakas, later additions certainly crept in in view of the fact that the present version of the Canon is not earlier than the 3rd cen. B.C. while the Jātaka-attīka-kathā which has come down to us is not older than the 4th Cen. A. D. This non-contemporary character of the Jātakas has been admitted even by Mr. Rhys Davids who cannot be reproached for any bias against the antiquity of the early Buddhist literature. The Jātakas thus mention in addition to these, the kingdom of Bhāru (Bhūra Jāt. 213), Dantapura in the Kalinga coast (Kurudhanama Jāt. 276), the city of Drāvavati (Ghata and Adiptra 454, 546), city of Raurava in Sauvira, Potali (Jāt. 207, 301) the region of Godāvarti, Dandaka forest, Mahispeka kingdom and the river Kanhabennā (Sarabhanga and Sanklapatna-Jāt. 522 and 524), the Drāvida kingdom with the port of Kavirapattana and the adjacent islands of Nāga and Kāra (Akitti Jāt. 480).

In spite of this, however, we have admitted the evidence of the Epic and Jātaka traditions since the existence of many of these tribes and states is confirmed by the evidence of Greeks in India in the IVth cen. B. C. Not to speak of the kingdoms or tribes of North India, the Greeks mention not only the Ambastha, the Oxydrakoi, the Moloi, the Siboi, the Sovirs and other tribes on the border. Evidently, these states had already a long existence and did not come into existence all on a sudden. At the same time, the Greeks seem to have been familiar with many details relating to South India which they apparently derived from the northern Indians. This shows that the southern states like the Pāndyas or Andhras were already in existence and hence they must be taken to belong to the VIth or VIIth century B.C. at least, if not earlier.

indeed very scanty, but when we take in to account the information gleaned from the Upaniṣads, the Buddhist canon, the Jātaka tradition or the Dharmasūtras we can attempt a picture of the political life of that period which preceded the great Imperialistic movement culminating in the unification of the whole country under the Mauryas in the fourth cen. B.C.

The king ruled the country with the help of his ministers
The Council. and consulted public opinion on all important occasions.

As to the former, they seem to have formed a Council which was variously known as the Sabhā or the Pariṣat. The Sabhā by this time was an aristocratic body in which wisemen, royal relations office-bearers or popular leaders, had their place. The character of the Pariṣat cannot be determined exactly, but most probably it was similar to the Sabhā and was an aristocratic body. In the Upaniṣads, we find the Pariṣat repeatedly mentioned and it seems to have been closely connected with the king and frequented by wise men who often entered into political or philosophical discussions (Pariṣat—*Pari*=Gr. *Peri*—round, and *sad*=to sit—a meeting).

The ministers of state were gradually evolved out of the officers of state. The ministers and personal companions and associates of the king whom we have already found in the Brāhmaṇas. In course of time, their functions came to be defined. Prominent among these, were the Purohita, the Senāpati, the collector of taxes, the treasurer and a host of other officials. Very little is known about these in the Upaniṣads, but the Jātakas which preserve traditional accounts about real life mention a large number of officials, including the Purohita, the Artha-dharmānuśāsaka, or Sarvārtha-cintaka, the Viniscayama-hāmātya, the Senāpati, the Arghakāraka, the Bbāndāgārīka, the

Śreshṭī, the Rajjuka, the Dronāmāpaka, the Hiranayaka, the Sāratī, and the Dvauvārīka. In addition to these, there were minor officials like those in charge of elephants, elephant-trainers, collectors of taxes, officers in charge of villages, physicians, etc. The Kurudharma Jātaka gives prominence to only a few e.g. the Purobita, the Rajju-grāhaka, the Sāratī, the Śreshṭī, the Dronāmāpaka, the Dauvārīka and includes the Gaṇikā along with these. (see Jāts. 5, 25, 158, 218, 276, 318; also the Introduction to Rai Sahib's I. C. Ghose's Ben. tran. of Jāt. Vol. II.).

As in the Brāhmaṇas, the highest place among these advisers was probably occupied by the Purohita. He Purohita was not only a priest and spiritual guide, but also advised the king on *Artha* and *Dharma*. By sacrifices and prayers he averted evil and performed rites and sacraments. He advised kings on important matters and in more than one place he is described as Artha-dharmānuśāsaka or Dharmānuśāsaka.

In some Jātakas, we find the Purohita performing judicial functions (Jāt. 511 & 542). The office of the Purohita was often hereditary and descended from father to son (Jāts. 120, 163, 411, 422). The Dharmasūtras also speak of the high office of the Purohita. According to them, he seems to have been associated with the king in the administration of justice and was liable to fast or penance along with the king, if there was miscarriage of justice. Some Jātakas mention an Amātya as the highest officer of the realm advising the king on Dharma and Artha; (Jāt. 25, 195); elsewhere (158), we find a Sarvārthacintaka doing these services.

The Senāpati was the commander of the armed forces and had under him minor commanders. The Viniścayāmātya was a criminal officer and combined police and judicial functions,

the Arghakāra was the Court-valuer who ascertained the price of purchases made on behalf of the king (Jāt. 5). The Rajju-grāhaka (*lit.* officer carrying a measuring rope) was both a surveyor and a criminal magistrate, the Śreṣṭhi was the Banker, the Hiranyaśaka was the Treasurer, the Droṇa-māpaka was the officer who ascertained the royal share of corn and exacted it, while the Bhāṇḍāgārīka was the officer in charge of the royal stores. The Sāratī and Dvauvārika derived importance from their close association with the royal person and ranked as Amātyas. The Dvauvārika was in charge of the palace-gate and hence wielded immense influence. The Chatra-grāha and Asigrāha similarly held high rank. Village headmen were appointed by the king and Codakas apprehended criminals. There were others who enjoyed the income of villages and these included Purohitas, Mahāśāla Brāhmaṇas or Kṣatriyas warriors. These officers performed their various duties. A fairly well developed administration system had thus come into existence.

Judicial Machinery :—Justice was administered in the name of the king. He was the highest judge in civil and criminal matters. In regard to the latter, the idea of the violation of the 'kings peace' had gained ground. This would appear from the interpretation of the 'Rājadūta' and the taking of the king's name to dissuade a culprit from wrong-doing. In the absence of a fully developed machinery for judicial administration, local officials and corporate bodies possessed minor jurisdiction. Beginning with the Grāmabhojaka, cases on appeal were tried by the Senāpati (Jāt. 220) Purohita (511, 542), the Uparāja (542) and ultimately by the king. The Mahāparinibbāṇa Sutta mentions two other judicial officers among the Licchavis e.g. the Atthakulaka and Suttadhbāra.

Judicial Administration.—Further and more interesting light is thrown upon the system of Judicial administration by the Dharma-sūtras. First of all, they show in clear terms the participation of public bodies and elders in the administration of Justice. With the king, indeed, the final decision lay, but he was not absolute. His Purohita advised on points of law and the facts were judged by the Sabbāsadas selected from Brāhmaṇas or the elders of towns or guilds. Moral liability to do justice attached to all of them. The king and the Purohita had to purify themselves in case of miscarriage of justice and the Sabbāsadas too were supposed to incur divine punishment if they failed to give out the true and impartial judgment.

Next, they show the evolution of a legal system. It grew out partly through the recognition of principles guiding the conduct of the various castes, their duties and privileges in the social scale, the acceptance of the old customary laws regulating marriage, inheritance and sonship, the recognition of the validity of caste-laws and guild laws, the laying down of rules as regards evidence and procedure and in criminal cases, the establishment of regulations relating to punishment or fines in lieu of murder or injury.

The Royal office.—The Royal office was hereditary and generally passed from father to son. Succession to the throne was often disputed and wars took place between rival brothers. To obviate these obstacles to peace, there arose the practice of selecting the heir and making him *Yuvardja* as we know from the Rāmāyaṇa and other Brāhmaṇical books. The Jātakas speak repeatedly of the institution of *Uparāja* (see Jāt. 50, 338, and 415) which is also found in the Mahābhārata. Generally, the eldest son of the king became

Upāraja, though we find instances of younger brothers holding this position (*Jāt.* 6, 181, 228), and if the king was childless, the Upāraja during the reign of his elder brother became king.

But inspite of this, dynastic troubles caused unhappiness in the royal family and consequently in the kingdom. As we approach the close of the period, we find the evidence of such evils befalling kingdoms. Polygamy which existed even in the Vedic period, became almost universal and with the growth of royal power, kings came to have larger harems filled with intriguing co-wives or ambitious concubines (*see Jāts.* 561, 472, 531). These became sources of considerable trouble. The unfilial conduct of sons often caused great anxiety to their royal fathers and the *Jātakas* contain innumerable instances of rebellious sons and rebellious queens. We have at least one instance of a queen intriguing against her royal husband (*Jāt.* 416), while instances of rebellious sons are many (*cf.* Ajātaśatru in *Jāt.* 150; and Viruḍhaka in *Jāt.* 465; also 338 and 373). Jealous fathers, too, feared the manly vigour, virtue or popularity of their sons and often exiled them (*cf.* *Jāt.* 193, 234; for exile of Upārājas—*Jāt.* 181, 320, etc.), or otherwise removed them from the capital. Probably owing to all this, the conduct of princes to their children or the methods of keeping sons under control became the theme of unscrupulous kings or their more unscrupulous courtiers and theorists. The views of these people are embodied in the *Arthaśāstra* and the latter work when carefully analysed shows a continuity of development both of the Art of government as well as of the principles of king-craft which found favour in an age of unscrupulousness.

On the extinction of the royal family or if the throne was otherwise made vacant, the king's near relatives filled the throne subject to being accepted by the people. A son-in-law (Jāt. 292) or a near relation married to the king's daughter was often chosen (Jāts. 126, 539). The Kuśa Jātaka (531) contains an account which hints at the existence of the practice of raising a son by *nigoga*. Otherwise, the throne was filled up by an elected popular nominee. We have innumerable instances of such elections to the royal office. Some Jātakas contain (e.g. 371, 445, 529, 539) a description of the ceremonial of election in which the Purohita took a pre-eminent part. After a due proclamation, the royal chariot carrying the insignia of royalty and drawn by four white horses was driven through the streets followed by the army. The Purohita or the Elders chose the king-elect according to his qualities or his bodily signs which betrayed his greatness.

According to some other Jātakas, such elections were made at the instance of the Elders and the Amātyas. Generally Kṣattriyas of good family were chosen, but caste was not a bar to this election to royal office, for, in at least two Jātakas (73 and 432), we find Brāhmaṇas elected to the royal office. In another Jātaka (Nigrodha, 445), we find a low-caste man chosen king. (*See* I. C. Ghose's. Intro. to Ben. trans. of Jātaka, Vol. II).

When kings proved tyrannical, subjects often rose in revolt and expelled or killed the tyrant (Jāts.—73, 194, 432). The throne was then regarded as vacant "since the king had broken the solemn covenant between him and the people." Sovereignty being vested in the people, their right to make a new king revived and they filled his place by a new election.

As to the relation of kings to their subjects, the evidence of the Jātakas is rather conflicting and shows a commixture of idealism arising out of popular veneration for a righteous king and of realistic tales of royal tyranny. In some Jātakas, we have traditions relating to righteous kings doing their best for the people, building granaries for times of disaster, watching over their welfare and sacrificing every thing for them. Some went so far as to wander about in disguise to know the real condition of their subjects (Rājovāda Jāt., 141; and Nānāchanda, 281). For such kings, the people had reverence in return and they were looked upon as if they were gods. Many Jātakas contain the idea that an audience of the king brought religious merit (Dūta, 260). Similarly, we have the idea that in the kingdom of a righteous king, rainfall was regular and the gods were kind to the people (cf. Jāts. Mapicora, 194; Kurudhamma, 276) and *vice versa*. The Kurudhamma Jātaka shows how owing to the influence of these ideas, the virtuous king of the Kurus was approached by the Kaliṅga ruler wishing to learn the secret of his kingdom's prosperity.

On the other hand, we have innumerable stories of unrighteous kings (cf. Jāt. Bhṛgu, 213; Taṇḍulanāli, 5; Dhammaddhaja, 620; Khantivāli, 313; Culla-dhammapāla, 358; Cetiya 422; Rathalaṭṭhi, 332) taking bribes, drinking wine, exacting heavy taxes (Mahāpiṅgala, 240; Gaṇḍatindu, 520) or unjustly punishing and torturing subjects to death. Such kings often received support from their ministers and even from the Purohita.

The remedy of such tyranny was naturally a popular revolt of which we have innumerable examples. These revolts were

not only physically necessary but were justified by the prevailing political ideas, namely,

- (1) That king-ship arose out of a contract between the subjects and the ruler chosen by them.
- (2) That the sovereign rights of the king were limited to the protection of subjects and punishment of wrong-doers and he was bound by the law.

The idea of election is found in the Ulūka Jātaka (270), while the second idea is found in the Telapatta Jātaka (96), where the king admonishes the Yaksini. We shall discuss these in detail in their proper place.

The people, according to the Jātaka evidence, maintained their rights and privileges for a long time. They derived their importance partly from their number and partly from their organisations and also from the fact that in the small states the administrative machinery was not yet divorced from popular participation. The popular bodies were of various kinds and comprised mainly the corporate unions which sprang up towards the close of the Vedic period and which were known by various names which still subsist in our literature. Prominent among these, were the Śrenis (or Seniyo), and the Pūgas which were guilds of craftsmen or lower class labourers. Almost all the arts and crafts were organised into such guilds. Each of these had a central organisation, probably a common fund, an elected leader Jetṭhaka or Grāmanjika, and a body of Elders. In the canonical literature including the Jātakas, we have a traditional list of eighteen crafts, though the number towards the close was certainly greater than that.* Mutual help against powerful

* For a detailed description of these see my *Economic Life and Progress in Ancient India*, Vol. I., Bk. III.

antagonists was the chief aim of these bodies and they came to wield very great influence in the growing city-life of the day.

Wealthy merchants, too, had their associations and the Śreṣṭhis wielded considerable influence in the royal councils. The Śreṣṭhis who held a dominating position in the financial world, had a recognized place in society and the king consulted their opinion. Their exact relation to their royal masters is not yet clearly known, but it is quite clear that in all states the Mahāśreṣṭhis (along with the Culla or Anuśreṣṭhis) occupied a position of great influence.

While these bodies represented the interests of capital craft, occupation, or labour, there were other bodies which claimed importance from other considerations. These were the representatives of local public interests. Of these, the more important were the Village-communities which continued for a long time to enjoy local authority and considerable administrative powers within the local area. They were the smallest social and political units of the state-fabric which had been in existence even in the Vedic period. They were ruled over by headmen or Grāmanis chosen by the villagers together with a number of village people who acted as assistants. They administered the village, maintained local peace, decided boundary-disputes or small civil and criminal suits, acted as guardians of infants and widows, and raised funds for the maintenance of local schools, works of local utility or for the preservation of local sanitation. They often recruited men from amongst themselves to fight bands of robbers or raised funds for feeding people in times of famine. The properties of local gods or those dedicated to the public good were also entrusted to them.

Their opinion was often taken into consideration by kings, and the *Mahāvagga* contains the story of Seniyo Bimbisāra consulting eighty-thousand Grāma-leaders. The *Culla Suta-soma Jātaka* similarly speaks of a king's 80000 councillors, probably village-elders. Some very important details are furnished by the fifth chapter of the *Sabbāparvan* of the Epic. There we find Nārada asking Yudhiṣṭhīra as to whether the "Pañca" were busy with their work. The *Pañca* was clearly the fore-runner of the modern *Panchayet* of the village and according to the commentator, comprised five village officials, e.g. the *Samāhartā* or village tax-collector, *Saṃvidhātā*, the *Prasāstā*, and *Lekhaka* and the *Sākṣi*.

Kings of those days could not but respect their rights and privileges. Local laws and customs were recognized and the customs of guilds of craftsmen were also regarded as valid. This is confirmed not only by the *Jātakas* but also by the *Darmasūtras*. Gautama expressly speaks of the customs and practices of artisans, shepherds and usurers. This local self-government was a prominent feature of ancient Indian life. Gradually, however, favoured by circumstances, kings extended their authority over these bodies and many *Jātakas* show that the *Gāmabhujakas* had come to be regarded as officers of the king.

The close of this period saw the gradual extension of royal authority. A number of forces and factors contributed to it. We shall discuss this topic in detail in a later section in which we shall describe the rise of the "New Monarchies" towards the beginning of the VIth century B.C.

Republics and Republicanism

HAVING given a general survey of the progress of monarchy from the close of the Vedic period, we pass on to the subject of republics about which ample information is available during this period. The history of these republics is an interesting study and shows the gradual evolution of pluralistic political discipline as opposed to the deification of authority vested in a single individual. It is difficult to determine whether republics were evolved out of monarchies, as some eminent writer has supposed. The best and most reasonable view would be perhaps to hold that the germs of the non-monarchical form of government lay in the institutions of the past and as time went on these not only survived but were strengthened in certain localities while in the Central region, sacerdotalism strengthened the basis of the monistic political discipline. As we have already seen, the early Vedic tribes and clans were organised on the basis of blood relationship. The members of the group retained their independence and local governing authority, though owning allegiance to chiefs belonging to a certain family. With the spirit of war and conquest, well-constituted sub-divisions of such organisations came into existence and they are well known in Vedic literature, e.g. *Gāṇa*, *Vrāta*, *Sārdha* and *Viśah*. With change of circumstances, the *Viś* changed its character and allegiance to hereditary chiefs developed into

monarchical discipline. In regions which remained outside the influence of the social and religious changes, the older character of social life and organisation survived and in course of time, many more corporate bodies like the *Gāṇa*, *Sāṅgha* or *Pūga* came into existence for purposes of social or economic activity. The wandering bands of philosophers and sophists also came to have their own Saṅghas, as we know from the traditions relating to the rise of Buddhism and Jainism.²⁹

The Sūtras of Pāṇini throw a flood of light on such bodies and in the work of that eminent grammarian we find a number of words to denote them. They are *Gāṇa*, *Pūga*, *Sāṅgha* and *Vrāta* and meant "associations or aggregates of the many" applied to men and sometimes figuratively to animals. Of these, the word *Vrāta* retained its old Vedic significance of a fighting band, while *Pūga* had the meaning of an association for purposes of commercial or economic activity. *Sāṅgha* and *Gāṇa* which also had the primary meaning of "aggregate" or "union" came to be applied to unions or "associations" of various descriptions.

In the work of Pāṇini, the two words *Gāṇa* and *Sāṅgha* appear in a number of Sūtras. Thus, in one of them we have the rule for the abnormal formation of the words *Sāṅgha* and *Udgha* in the sense of *Gāṇa* or *Sāmīha* or for eulogy. Hero

²⁹ Mr. Jayawal thinks that in the days of Pāṇini, the religious Saṅgha was not in existence. There is, however, no evidence to prove it. On the other hand, the general evidence of the Sūtras or the examples furnished by the commentators proves rather the contrary. The Saṅgha was not an institution invented by the Buddha but all religious fraternities of the period were organised into such bodies. They were inaugurated with a view to preserve the cultural and spiritual tradition in the followers rather than depend wholly on one individual (cf. Buddha's exhortation to Ānanda at the time of his death, *mahāparinibbuddha-suttanta*) who was supposed to act as the spiritual leader in succession to the original founder.

Saṅgha is clearly equated with Gapa.* In another sūtra which lays down the rule for the formation of the words *Nikāya* and *Nicaya*, we find the word *Saṅgha* used in the sense of a collection of men or animals.† The same meaning of "collection" or "aggregation" appears from two other sūtras where *Saṅgha* is used along with the words *Vahu*, *Gapa* and *Pūga*.‡ Lastly, in one more sūtra, we have the rule for the formation of new words from nominal prefixes in the sense of a group or association, mark or body.§ No more information as to the meaning of the word is available, though Mr. Jayaswal thinks that the last sūtra shows the existence of badges and marks distinguishing the Saṅghas.||

*Pāṇini III. iii. 80. सङ्ग वी गपयत्तेष्योः—The rule laid down is that *Saṅgha* is an abnormal form in place of *Saṅghāta* and means *Gapa*. *Udgha* is a term of praise. As examples we have in Kāśikā सङ्गः पश्याम चहो चन्द्रः । गपयत्तेष्योरिति किं—उद्घातः ।

† एवे चान्तराधर्मे III. iii. 42. As examples of collections for which the word *saṅgha* is used, we have the words भिक्षुकनिष्ठयः, शूक्रमिष्ठयः ।

‡ Pāṇini V. ii. 52. वृषभगच्छवम् तिष्कृ । As examples we have the words वृषतिष्कृ वृषतिष्कृ, दूरतिष्कृ, मङ्गलिष्कृ ।

The same sense of collection appears from V. i. 58 and its commentary in the Mahābhāṣya or Patīkājali says 'सङ्गः उम्हः उम्हादायः' Kaiyata is clearer and says उम्हादाय उम्हालिष्यामादायित्वाम् उम्हादायः सङ्गः ।

§ Pāṇini, IV. iii. 127. सङ्गाद्वासवेष्यत्वं अव्यञ्जयामयः The Kāśikā comments on it as follows:—सङ्गाद्वासवेष्यत्वं प्रव्याप्तिर्वेष्यत्वं अव्यञ्जयाद् उम्हादाय उम्हालिष्यत्वं अव्यञ्जयत्वं विकल्पिष्यत्वः । दूर्विष्कृ दूरीष्कृपवाहः । वृषविष्कृपवाहकवर्त्तयः । उन वैष्णवाद्वासवेष्यत्वं न अव्यञ्जयत् । अव्यञ्जयत् वैदिकः सङ्गः, वैदिकिष्कृः वैदिक अव्यञ्जयत् वैदिकः सङ्गः, शूक्रमिष्कृः, शूक्रमिष्कृवर्त्तयः । ... अव्यञ्जयत्वयोः की विजेयः । लक्ष्यत्वं लक्ष्यत्वमेव विकल्पिष्यत्वः । यदा विद्याविदामाद् अव्यञ्जयत्वादिक्षियपि उम्हादोनो स्त न अव्यञ्जयति ।

|| This however is not justified by the evidence of the Sūtra, the Vārtika or the example furnished by the Kāśikā. Excepting the mere juxtaposition of the three words, there is nothing which supports the view of Mr. Jayaswal. The commentators are unanimous in holding the opinion that the *sa* suffix is applied to derive words of the sense of a corporation, a mark, or a body. For Jayaswal's views, see pp. 42-44.

The exact connotation of *Gaṇa* in Pāṇini is thus difficult to find out. Clearly, from its general sense of collection the idea of a corporate body is apparent but not the technical political sense. Mr. Jayaswal thinks that the term "Gaṇa signified the form of Government. Saṅgha on the other hand, signified the state." But this interpretation has hardly any foundation or justification. Pāṇini equates Saṅgha with Gaṇa and both seem to be used to mean a collection or association of the many. Later authorities hold the same opinion and use the two words in the same sense. As for the technical sense, the two evidently meant corporate bodies or unions, and the explanation given in chapter CVII of the Śānti-parva shows the same thing, as far so gaṇa is concerned. With the meagre data at our disposal, it is difficult to distinguish the two clearly or to find out the technical sense which each of them had in that period. Probably, there were technical differences, but these passed away and even in early Buddhist literature, we find these two terms used rather loosely. For, in these works as well as in the Milinda-pañha, the six great religious teachers, e.g. Buddha, Gosāla, Mahāvīra, Ajita, Sāñjaya and Kāśyapa are called both Saṅghis and Gaṇis. Probably, the most reasonable view would be to take Gaṇas as the primary unions composed of families of the same kindred while a *Saṅgha* is to be regarded as an aggregate of such *Gaṇas*.

Many European scholars have translated the word *Gaṇa* by the English equivalent of 'tribe'. This meaning applied irrespectively of the time of use is rather confusing and requires a correction to which Mr. Jayaswal has drawn our attention (p. 29). It may or may not be that the early Gaṇas were based on a real or supposed bond of kinship, but as time went on, their original character was modified and they came to be organised on different lines.

The early Vaiśya Gaṇas were organised groups mainly of near relatives for co-operative purposes. Similar were the Gaṇas mentioned repeatedly in the Yajus Saṃhitās. Later on, the principle of affiliation on the basis of common objective or purpose, changed the original aspect of Gaṇas. Such has been the history of all such organisations. The European guilds or corporations, too, show a similar change in character.

While we have no more details about the organisation of the *Ganás* and *Saṅghas*, Pāṇini tells us something about another class of Saṅghas and gives us details about the locality where they existed. These are the Āyudhajīvī Saṅghas of the Vāhika country or the region of the hills.* In four or five sūtras† the importance of which was pointed out by Mr. Jayaswal, we have mention of these bodies. From a study of his sūtras, we know that the following were the more important of these Āyudha-jīvins.

- (1) The Vāhikas of western Punjab.
- (2) The Republicans of the Hills.
- (3) The Vṛkas.
- (4) The Dāmanī and others.
- (5) The group of six in the Trigarta country.
- (6) The Parśus and others.
- (7) The Yaudheyas and others.
- (8) And probably the various sections of the Audumbaras

* Pāṇini V. 3. 113-117. अःत्वं पर्योदयाद् ; (114) आयुधजीविनहात् चाक् वाहीकैवाहात्य राजसाध् ; (115) इष्टाद् रेष्टाद् ; (116) दामनादि विश्वस्त्रपात्र, चः ; (117) पर्यादि वीर्यादिभ्य इष्ट्यज्ञो आयुधजीविनहात् चः पर्यादे ।

† See K. P. Jayaswal p. 25 Vol. I.

The Vāhikas were the people who inhabited the western Punjab and whom we find so opprobriously denounced by Karṇa in course of his dispute with Salya, king of Madra. Very little is known of the Vṛkas but their name 'wolf' is suggestive of their ferocity in war. Of the Dūmanī and their kindred very little is known. The Trigartas figure repeatedly in the chapters on Conquest in the Mahābhārata. Probably, they occupied the hill regions of northern Punjab. In the *Parsu* (*Parośu*—axe), we may clearly recognize that old Vedic tribe of the same name. The famous Yaudheyas retained their independence and military prowess for more than ten centuries as will be shown later on. They also retained to a great extent, their non-monarchical character for a long period. The list of these is clearly not exhaustive, neither can we expect such an exhaustive enumeration from a grammarian whose business was to find rules for the various suffixes applied to designate men of different localities or following diverse occupations. More details about these western border republics come forth when real history dawns with the invasion of India by Alexander, the greatest conqueror of antiquity. The commentators, however, give us many examples to illustrate the rules and thus give us the names of some of these republics. The names of the Mālavas, Kṣudrakas and a host of such others whom we had already found in the Epic appear in the Kāśikā and the same book preserves an old verse (quoted out first by Mr. Jayaswal) which gives us the names of the six military Republics of the Trigarta group.

[†] The Kāśikā comments as follows :—

विमतः यहो विद्या ते विवरणस्ता इत्युच्चान्ते । तेऽपि विद्यं कृतिः—

चारुकिर्त्तनं पठान्तु कौशीपरवदाक्षको ।

बीहारिकां ब्रह्मानिधि राज्यगुरुत्वं कामविः ॥

Nothing further is known about these peoples except that they were chiefly addicted to the pursuit of arms. In this respect, they may be compared to some extent with the military orders of medieval Europe, who remained for a long time the bulwark against the invasions of the Slavs in central Europe, and later, on against the Turks in Syria and the Levant. The names of the Teutonic Knights of the Sword, or the Templars and Hospitallers are too well known to be repeated here. No more details are known about these peoples excepting that they were mainly composed of Kṣattriya fighters, though men of other castes like Brahmins or traders were affiliated into their respective states. This has been ably pointed out by Mr. Jayaswal who has substantiated his point by illustrations from the Kāśikā. (Jayaswal, p. 34, 35). Some exceptions, however, may be taken to his views. Thus, while it is admissible that members of other castes were admitted in their territories, there are reasons for holding that the ruling organisation was mainly one of the fighting peoples. This would appear from the evidence of some of the sūtras quoted by Mr. Jayaswal himself which lay down rules for the formation of words denoting membership of a particular tribe or state, through affiliation or allegiance to the local Kṣattriya rulers. The three or four sūtras which throw important side-light on this point, show clearly that a distinction was made between the ruling clan and the affiliated population.*

*Three sūtras bear on this important point e.g. IV. i. 168—**क्षत्रियाण् अविद्यात् एव**, IV. 2. 124—**जनपदवर्णोऽस्मि**; and IV. iii. 100 which is taken along with the general rule of this particular section e.g. IV. iii. 93 **एतदेव**. In IV. iii. 100, we have the rule **क्षत्रियोऽस्मि जनपदवर्णं तस्मै जनपदेन जनापदवर्णं वर्तयन्ते**: The first sūtra lays down that the suffix **एव**, is to be added (to designate a descendant) to the name of a country which also designates a Kṣattriya tribe. When this word designates a kṣatriya tribe but not a country the suffix is **एतदेव** and there is a difference in the accent. The Vārtika of Kātyāyana adds a further

Apart from these Ayudha-jivī Saṅghas which flourished in the extreme West, Pāṇini seems to have been familiar with other such political organisations, which existed in the South and in the East. Of these we have no details in his sūtras but there are clearer evidences from other sources, e.g.

- (1) The Vṛjis } in the East
- (2) The Bhargas }
- (3) The Andhaka-Vṛṣnis in the South.
- (4) The Rājanyas.

To these Mr. Jayaswal adds the Mahārājas and the Madras (p. 39). Of the Bhargas and Vṛjis, we shall speak very soon and give detailed accounts in connection with the republican clans of which we have clear accounts in the Jain and Buddhist Canon. Of the Andhaka-Vṛṣnis, we have given an account so far as it is available from the Epic, but some more interesting particulars are available from the sūtras of Pāṇini, if their interpretation by Mr. Jayaswal is accepted. They are mentioned in two sūtras of Pāṇini and in one of them we find a hint that they had a "joint federal constitution in which the Executive authority was vested in two Rājanyas with their respective *Vargas*."* Although the evidence cited is rather scanty, there is ample reason for partly accepting Mr. Jayaswal's views (see Hindu Polity, pp. 39-41.; also appendix A. part I.)

condition that the same suffix may be added to denote a king (as opposed to a saṅgha जातिया देवताजाति संघजातियोग्यान्). The second sūtra lays down the rule for adding राजा. The third sūtra prescribes the addition of suffixes in the sense of one owing allegiance to a king if the prince-denoting word have in the plural the same form as the kingdom-denoting word. The Kālikā (V. iii. 114.) clearly distinguishes between the term राजा applicable to a Brahmin from राजा applied to a member of the Kṣattriya gāṇa.

In regard to the Mahārajas, it is not difficult to accept Mr. Jayaswal's views, though in one place the commentators explain "Mahārajikas" as a group of Gaṇa-devatās devoted to Kuvera. The term Rājanya, as we shall see, seems to have been used in the sense of the ruling Kṣattriya oligarchy which in those days ruled over a portion of Western India. The case of the Madras is open to grave doubts, since Pāṇini furnishes no clue to their constitution in his days.

Though Pāṇini is silent as regards the republics on the Eastern fringe, yet we are fortunate in having some details about them from the canonical literature of Buddhism and Jainism which arose in that locality and the founders of which were closely connected with the rulers of these states. Perhaps, the first to give a detailed account of these Eastern republics, was the late Prof. Rhys Davids, who in his *Buddhist India* supplied us with a clear account of these together with their system of administration. The republican states in that locality had sprung up with the dissolution of the Videhan Monarchy. The following is a list of them, e.g.

(1) The Sākyas with their capital at Kapilavastu ; they occupied the area of the modern Gorakhpur district.

(2) The Koliyas of Rāmagrāma.

(3) The Licchavis with their capital, at Vaiśāli. Their territory was round modern Besarh in the district of Muzaffarpur.

(4) The Videhas with their capital at Mithilā, which is included in the modern Dvarbhanga district.

(5 & 6) The two sections of the Mallas with their capitals at Kusinārā and Pāvā. They covered a large area.

(7) The Moriyas of Pippalivana.

(8) The Bulis of Allakappa.

(9) The Bhaggas of Supsumūra hill.

The majority of these republican states remained obscure, but the Sākyas, Licchavis and the Mallas gained celebrity on account of their close connection with the founders of the Jain and Buddhist religions. A picture of the administrative system in these republics is to be found in the pages of Mr. Rhys Davids's Buddhist India (pp. 21-22). In each, there was a central Assembly which was located in the Mote Hall where all questions of public concern were discussed. After discussion, the points at issue were put to vote and the opinion of the majority decided everything. The Governmental authority was vested in a Rājā who was more of an elected President than a hereditary monarch. Under him were officials who had distinguishing uniforms and different duties.

The Licchavis.—We now proceed to discuss the constitution of the Licchavis of Vaisālī. In regard to these people, our information is mainly furnished by tradition recorded in the early Buddhist Canonical literature, including canonical commentaries, and the Jātakas. The Mahāparinibbānasuttanta records some historical traditions about these powerful clans, but we have little details. In the Jātakas, however, we find the Licchavis mentioned several times. Thus, in the introduction to the Ekapāṇṇa Jātaka, we are told that in Vesālī, the city of the Licchavis, there were always seven thousand seven hundred and seven kings (rājāno) to govern the state and a like number of viceroys (uparāja), generals (senāpati), and treasurers (Ekapāṇṇa Jātaka 149). In the Cullakālinga Jātaka (301), we find the same tradition recorded together with the interesting statement that "tradition says that the Licchavis of the ruling family to the number of 7,707 had their abode at Vaiśālī and all of them were given to argument and disputation." (e. g., Vesālī-nagare Licchavirajinam sattasaḥassāni sattasatāni satta ca Licchavi vasiṣṭsu. Te sabbe pi paripucchā-vitakkā' hesum, etc.).

Again, the Bhaddasāla Jātaka (no. 463) recording a tradition speaks of "the tank in Vaiśāli city whence the family of kings got water for the ceremonial sprinkling on the occasion of their coronation." It was covered with an iron net so that not even a bird could get through. And we further learn that the tank was closely guarded. (*Vesalinagare gaṇarāja-kulāram abhiseka-maṅgala-pokkhārani*, etc.). The Licchavi princes regarded the use of the water of this tank as a peculiar privilege of their own and they severely resented any violation of the sacredness of the tank by anybody else than their own community. Consequently, the same story relates, when the general of the king of Kosala violated the sacredness of the tank by bathing his wife in it, the Licchavis were furious with anger and sent five hundred of their own community to pursue him.

In addition to these we have something more about the Licchavis in the *Atṭha-kathā*. From this, we know that they had a peculiar system of judicial administration in which a criminal case was tried by successive judicial tribunals, presided over by officers with various judicial powers. The first to try it was the *Vinicchaya-mahāmacca* and next to him were the *Vohārikas* and the *Suttadharas* and above them were the *Atṭahkuaka*, the *Senāpati* and the *Uparāja*. All these could acquit the guilty but as a rule they had to send him to the next higher tribunal. The highest tribunal was that of the *Rājā* who had the right to convict the accused and pass sentence on him according to the *Pāveni-potthaka* or the Book of Precedents.

We have some more information about the Licchavis from the literature of the Jains. According to them, the founder of their religion, Mahāvīra was related to the Licchavis of Vaiśāli through his mother Trīśalā whose brother Cetaka was

called "King of Vaiśāli." In Jain books we have traces of the curious government of the Licchavis, for in the Nirayāvali-sutta it is related that king Ceṭaka whom Ajātaśatru prepared to attack called together the "eighteen kings," of Kāsi and Kosala, the Licchavi and Mallai. Again, on the death of Mahāvīra, the "eighteen confederate kings of Kāsi and Kosala" did honour to him.

As to the composition of the Licchavi Assembly, we have no more information except that it was a deliberative body in which all questions relating to the affairs of state were fully discussed and decided by the voice of the majority. This is proved by some of the passages quoted above, as also by that well-known passage in the Mahāparipūbbānasutta in which the Great Buddha laid down the conditions under which the Vajjians "would prosper and not decline." The occasion on which the sermon was uttered by the Buddha, arose when Ajātaśatru, King of Magadha, determined upon destroying the Vajjians, sent his minister, the Brahmin Vassakāra, to him to take his advice on the point. When that Brahmin had delivered the message, the Blessed One enquired of Ānanda whether he was aware that the Vajjians hold "full and frequent assemblies." Ānanda having replied in the affirmative, the Buddha laid down the conditions of their success which are mentioned in the Mahāparipūbbāna.

The evidence of the passages quoted above goes to prove without doubt that the constitution of the Licchavis was not of the ordinary monarchical type. It was on the other hand a 'Saṅgha' or to explain in clearer terms it was a republican federation of small states, the chiefs of which met in a Central Assembly to discuss affairs relating to the whole confederation. The number of these petty chiefs, who are all called Rājāno, is not known. The number

7,707 occurring in the preambles of the Jātakas may be dismissed as being purely imaginary.

Now, as to these petty principalities which formed the confederation, there is no doubt that they were ruled by the Licchavi chiefs themselves. This is proved by the fact that each of them had his Uparājas, Senāpatis and other officers. They ruled, moreover, by hereditary right. Their sons were called Kumāras (as mentioned in the Ekappaṇṇa Jātaka) and moreover, they formed an exclusive body—a ruling caste with rights and privileges, which they jealously guarded as their own, as would appear from the story of the sacred tank of Vaiśāli quoted above.

These considerations will prove beyond doubt that the Licchavi constitution was oligarchic, *i. e.*, it was of a type in which political power was vested in a privileged class or community.

There are, however, some scholars, who go farther than this and believe in a democratic character of the Licchavi constitution. Their theory is based partly upon the supposition that among the Licchavis, political power was enjoyed by men of all classes and castes and the democratic constitution of the Licchavis was the model from which the Buddhist Saṅgha was copied by the Blessed One. These scholars further believe that as such the constitution and procedure of the Licchavi Assembly, was similar to that followed in the Saṅgha.

Now, in regard to the first assumption, there is no ground for believing that men of all classes and castes enjoyed equal political power. From the Buddhist books where we have more information about the Sākiyas, we know that there were settlements of other castes in the locality—(the Brahmin settlement of Khamadussa for example) but they are never described as enjoying a place in the Deliberation Hall. Pokkhara-sādi when he goes to Kapila-

vatthu finds only the Sākiyas deliberating in the Mote Hall. On another occasion, Suddhodana is described as talking to the council of the Sākiya nobles. From these, we may safely presume that, as in the case of the Sākiyas, political authority at Vesāli was in the hands of the Licchavis only, the affiliated population of other castes being excluded from it.

As to the Buddhist Saṅgha, there can be no doubt that it was founded upon democratic principles. The first to notice this, were Dr. Oldenberg and Prof. Rhys Davids. The latter in his Hibbert Lecture delivered in 1881 (in which he had to illustrate some points in the history of Indian Buddhism) remarked that "the Order was a kind of republic in which all proceedings were settled by resolutions agreed upon in regular meetings of its members which were held subject to the observance of certain established regulations and the use of certain forms of words. These forms and the resolutions passed were called Kammavācās." (See Rhys Davids H. L., 1881, pp. 38-40.)

The democratic character of the Buddhist Order is further illustrated by the fact that in addition to the rules and resolutions we further learn from the Mahāvagga and the Culavagga, that (1) the Buddhist Saṅgha had a body of rules regarding the forms of resolutions to be moved in the Assembly (XI—1—4, IV—2—2.)

(2). There was a rule of quorum (M. V. IX—3.2).

(3). In cases of difference of opinion, the sense of the Assembly was decided by the votes of the majority. There were methods prescribed for the counting of votes and voting by ballot was known. (C. V. IV. 9—IV—14—26).

(4). Complicated matters were referred to the decision of committees (C. V. IV.—14—24).

(5). Lastly, definite rules seem to have existed regarding such matters as the votes of absentees.

These are facts supported by evidence but as to the contention that the Political Saṅgha was the prototype of the Licchavi Saṅgha and that the procedure followed in the Political Assembly was the same as the Buddhist Order, the following observations may be put forward :

(i) Firstly, there is nothing to prove that the procedure in the Political Saṅgha was the same as in the religious order. As to the Political Saṅgha we have absolutely no details and the supposed resemblance is purely conjectural.

(ii) Secondly, there was a wide gulf of difference between the great religious order and the political assembly of the oligarchs. Undoubtedly, as Prof. Rhys Davids observed, "the Saṅgha was a kind of republic—an assembly of men, united in a common purpose, and living under a common discipline." But, the men who composed it were quite different from those of the ordinary world. They had snapped up the last link with the world, they followed no occupations, and were practically communists in respect of the belongings which they were allowed to retain by the Master.

(iii) Lastly, it is doubtful whether it was copied entirely from the Political Saṅgha. In forming a religious congregation there was every chance that the Buddha would organize it on democratic lines. As a scion of the republicans of Kapilavastu it would be natural for him to organise it on democratic principles. But with all these, we must take into account the fact that a religious fraternity in its infancy is always sure to be evolved on democratic lines. Such has been the case with many of the religious orders of the world. In India, other Saṅghas, too, existed in Buddha's

time.* The early Christians, too, had their gatherings, their elected bishops, and the early Mahomedans had as well, devised a democratic system. In more recent times, the Khalsa was organised on democratic lines. Yet none of these had anything to copy from. The Christians had the ideal of the universal Empire of Rome and the originator of the Khalsa had nothing but the centralised Mogul Empire to follow.

Consequently, we believe that it would be but going too far to say that the Licchavis were as democratic as the Buddhist order. They in fact, formed an oligarchical confederation. The chiefs ruled their own domains by hereditary right but as regards the whole Confederation, the Assembly settled the affairs. The chiefs enjoyed hereditary privileges and this receives confirmation from the evidence of the *Arthaśāstra*. The Rājaśabdins, mentioned there apparently formed a privileged body of hereditary nobles composing the Assembly, while the Saṅgha-mukhyas were elected office-bearers from amongst them.

In this respect there is also a similarity between the Yādava Confederacy and the Licchavi Confederation.

* In the *Sāmanaphala-sutta*, the six great teachers of the sixth century B. C. are all described as *saṅghikas*, *grahins* and *pancakriti*.

III

Great Events and Movements of the VIth Cen. B. C.

The sixth century before Christ, so remarkable in the intellectual and political history of the world, was no less so in the political history of India. Indian life was at once subjected to extraneous forces and commotion from within. For, while the imperialistic movement dawned in the east, western India covered by the local republics and tribal principalities was invaded by the most powerful foreign enemy of the day. At the same time, the Magadha-Videha region saw the greatest social and religious upheaval of antiquity. Before we pass on to a discussion of the second, we must describe the Persian invasion.

The Persian invasion took place in the reign of Cyrus, the founder of that great empire which stretched from the borders of India to the home of the Graeco-Mediterranean culture. Cyrus's first attempt to conquer India through Gedrosia was unsuccessful according to Strabo, but he seems to have been more successful in the Kabul valley. After 516 B. C. Darius's officer, Scylax, led a naval expedition through the Kabul and Indus rivers. As a result of this and other subsequent invasions, the region of Sind and western Punjab came to be constituted into the twentieth satrapy of the Persian Empire and we find the Hindus along with the Gandarians mentioned in the *Naksh-i-Rastam* inscription. This satrapy, the richest of all in the Empire, paid a tribute of 360 Talents

(£1,000,000) a year and Indian soldiers, clad in cotton and armed with bows and iron-tipped arrows, formed part of the army of the Great King which fought the Greeks. (see V. Smith pp. 35-36; McCrindle's *Ancient India* pp. 4-5; Herodotus VII 65; VIII 13; IX 19).

Probably, the Persians did not destroy the local tribes and states, but exacted tributes and military contingents. For this latter purpose, political officers and residents visited the different localities, but otherwise the local system of government was not interfered with. It may also be surmised that the non-monarchical form of government was also fostered by this foreign invasion which precluded any chance of Magadha Imperialism extending its sway there at an early date.

(ii). *Religious propaganda*.—While the foreign enemy was making its headway in the border provinces, a great social and intellectual commotion was shaking the very foundations of social life in the homeland of the Eastern Aryan-dom. For a long time the Brāhmanic religion of sacrifice had become an anomaly. The spirit of awe and wonder had passed away. The complicated ritual had lost its charms ; men forgot its significance and meaning, and its own votaries doubted its efficacy. Abstract speculation came into being and men enquired into the root causes of the phenomenal world, its diversities, the relations of men with nature and the causes that led to diversities in individual life. The doctrine of *karma* and of *rebirth* or *metempsychosis* according to good or evil actions in life gained ground. Pleasure in life or its perpetuation with sacrifice lost its charms and a hankering for self-realisation took its place.

The movement took a new turn in the East. In the days of the *Upaniṣads*, the court of the Janakas had already become a

great sophistic school. Here, Yājñavalkya propounded his philosophical teachings based on a synthesis of the past with newer ideas and interpretations of the same. Next came Kapila with his metaphysics of Dualism. Many more teachers arose but their history is lost. Only a few nick-names have survived of these exponents or occasionally some perverted accounts of their doctrines or distorted versions of their life have reached us.

With continued speculation, pessimism came. The social aspect of life was at a discount. The *Tāpasas* retired to the wilderness while the *Sramanas* or *Parivrājakas* formed orders of wandering ascetics who took upon themselves the duty of calling men from the evils of sensual existence and teaching the ways of salvation. Man ywere the wandering sects that came into existence in that remarkable age. It is our misfortune that no history properly speaking of this remarkable period has reached us and we mainly depend upon some stray facts or distorted traditions about them preserved in the annals of the orders which have survived. Of the surviving sects, only two *e.g.* Buddhism and Jainism assumed greater importance. Other systems gradually decayed and their doctrines or disciplines were forgotten. But the history of the two great systems is closely connected with the political history of the period.

Buddhism and other monastic religions and their influence on politics.—The influence of this socio-religious upheaval was great. It acted and reacted on life and ultimately the latent energies tiberated, affected politics. The commotion and convulsion it brought about, shook the very foundations of political existence, though as to the exact nature of the influences, there must remain room for differences of opinion. The material at our disposal is scanty and moreover it is difficult to understand the political teachings of the great teachers, if they had any.

But to the historian one prominent fact is noticeable, *e. g.*, that the rise of Buddhism and the other monastic systems is synchronous with the growth of administrative centralisation and imperial absolutism. Paradoxical as the statement may at first appear, its truth is borne out by the history of subsequent political developments. Thus, at the time of the Great Buddha we find northern India divided into a large number of states, some of which were monarchical while the rest were more or less democratic or republican. With the advancing tide of conquest and imperial domination some of the states mentioned in the list, had already lost their political existence. Āṅga had been annexed by Magadha and Kāsi the home of Ajātaśatru and of the Brahmadattas of the Jātakas, had become a part and parcel of the Kośala kingdom and its revenues were for the time settled on the Kosala bride of Bimbisāra. The Kurus the Pañcālas and the Matsyas still existed as separate kingdoms, but had lost their political importance.

Then within a century, the imperialistic movement assumed greater strength and the face of the country was entirely changed. Hardly had the Buddha closed his eyes, when his kinsmen the Sākiyas were exterminated as a race and within a short time, the rising power of Maghada destroyed the political importance of the Licchavis—that sturdy race of republicans whose history is so closely bound up with that of early Jainism and Buddhism. Gradually, one by one the small tribal democracies and later on the greater principalities like Kośala and Avanti all disappeared to make room for the extension of the Magadhan monarchy, which like an all-absorbing Leviathan swallowed up its weaker neighbours and became under Kauṭilya and Candra-gupta, the mightiest empire of the day.

This is indeed something paradoxical and to explain it is to solve one of the greatest riddles of History. Naturally, a scion of

republican oligarchs, Buddha was far from being one who believed in monarchy. He believed in the government of clan elders and his views are summarised in the address to Ānanda on the eve of Vassakāra's visit with a mission from Ajātaśatru. This sympathy for clan government in place of one-man rule, coupled with his efforts for the intellectual regeneration of the masses, has naturally led many scholars to think that Buddha was a champion of democracy in politics. In support of this, these men further point out that the Buddhistic Saṅgha was fully democratic and contained the principles of self-governing life. It was open to the admission of all without any distinction of caste or tribe and its members were brethren equal in all respects. Every question was discussed in the meetings of the Saṅgha and the line of action taken was that determined by the voice of the majority.

These points, however, while they go to prove without doubt the democratic character of the Buddhist Saṅgha fail to explain the synchronism of the rise of absolutism and rather point to conclusions other than that supported by facts. Coming to an explanation of this we find that the error of those who believe in the contribution of Buddhism to the cause of democracy, lies in their misconceptions and confusions regarding the real teachings of Buddha. Undoubtedly, the teachings of Buddha had a great scope for social equality but even then these did not constitute any democratic political ideal,

The examination of the character of the Saṅgha proves this. First of all, it was not intended for those who were members of society but for men who disavowed the necessity of a social life and left their homes to prepare themselves for the final dissolution. They lived a communistic life, as befitted those who had given up all connections with the world.

Secondly, the creation of the Saṅgha was no novelty and does not mark any democratic innovation. It was not the first of its kind in India. The other great leaders of wanderers were also founders of Sanghas. Ajita Kesakamvali, Gosāla, Vellāṭhiputta, Purana Kassapa, the Nāṭaputta all had similar organisations. Some of these were in fact more democratic, since they admitted slaves. Furthermore, there is one thing to be borne in mind. That under similar circumstances, the formation of a Saṅgha by the earliest adherants of a new teacher, was the only alternative which could safeguard these new believers from the hatred and persecution of the rest. For his own part Buddha did not wish to brush away the past or to figure as a propagandist for democracy or advocated violent changes. Order was his highest ideal and in more than one place, he tried to show that this was attainable by men if they followed those principles which underlie the exercise of authority (*Dhammo rāñño rājā*). Indeed, there are two important passages (*Cakkavatti-siha-nāda Sutta*, Dialogues Vol. II. part III; and *Raja Vagga Anguttara Nikaya III*) where he gives us the conditions of success in a monarchical rule.*

Next, we have reason for coming to the conclusion that the Buddha did nothing for democracy in politics. He meddled neither in society nor politics. His sympathies were for the good of the people and for their good government. Beyond this, he did not pronounce anything more. Moreover, all his sympathies and ideals were but heritages of the past. It was nothing more than a longing for the continuance of the system in which he had been born and bred up. The republicanism of the Lichchavi oligarchs was

* For this I am indebted to my learned friend Dr. B. M. Barua, M. A., D. Litt., of the Pali Department of Post-Graduate Teaching.

something which Buddha inherited from the past. He or his teachings had nothing to do with its origin or creation.

A careful analysis thus shows that Buddhism contained in it nothing of democratic political teaching. If any teachings it had so far as politics was concerned, they did not affect society directly. On the other hand, the influence of its teachings were not without consequences. It affected the mentality of the people. It changed their ideals of life ; it affected society by its action and the re-action it brought. The reasons why the teachings of Buddhism failed to stem the tide of absolutism but rather furthered the cause of the latter, are not far to seek.

First of all, the attempt to curtail the privileges of the higher orders especially the religious supremacy of the Brahmins who were the natural leaders of the people in their opposition to royal absolutism, removed some obstacles to the growth of despotic power. In ancient India, as in all primitive societies, the priest and the military nobility had been the sole checks to the irresponsibility of monarchs. The teachings of Buddha undermined the priestly position. His universal religion broke the cohesion of tribes and clans. The priest and the noble both lost their importance and thus absolutism had its enemies destroyed. Similar has been the case in Europe. The teachings of Luther fostered the cause of the absolutism of Princes and paved the way for their "divine right." Pure monarchy has often been the offspring of democratic teachings in religion.

(2) Secondly, it diverted popular attention from the arena of polities to that of religion. This again was something which helped the cause of absolutism. The master's teachings were misunderstood and misrepresented. They did mischief in society and also to the individual. Pessimism took a deeper hold. The

meaning of life was forgotten. The world came to be conceived as the home of eternal sorrow and life meant but its perpetuation for cycles of existence yet to come. Rather than face it, men shunned life itself. They feared the world. They scoffed at the joys of existence. They despised life and prayed for its dissolution. This longing for annihilation bore bitter fruit. It brought banition in life, and death in politics.

(3) Lastly, as the newly enfranchised masses lacking in political instincts were not powerful enough to check the growing power of their kings, the latter became more powerful day by day.

Reaction and the rise of Arthaśāstra Schools—The preachings of the reformers were fraught with grave consequences. The lower orders rose everywhere. The sacred traditions of the past became the object of ridicule with shaved-head monks. The privileged classes became alarmed for the safety of their birthright and they saw with disdain the progress of new ideas. Everything seemed topsyturvy—men scoffing at the joys of existence, women rejecting the overtures of affection or love and all mocking at the world.*

The excess of rigorism bore bitter fruit. Gradually, a reaction set in. New teachers appeared, who inveighed against the unsocial tendencies of the age. They interpreted human life in terms of man's natural desires, his social objectives and his higher spiritual aims. According to them, every thing was closely related and the

* A systematic history of this remarkable period is lost but the main social tendencies may be clearly discerned in some of the literature of the day. In the Canon, we find Māra approaching Buddha for his attempt to destroy social life. In the Therigāthā we find remarkable unsocial tendencies of the women of the day e.g. aversion to marriage or fear of child-birth. Some of the accounts of the Theris show the evils of monasticism. We find husbands leaving their wives and children and daughters leaving the home and in one case a nun even marries her father. The author contributed an article on this in the Sanskrit Bhāratī (1923).

sacrifice of one was prejudicial to the other. Social life was in their eyes, the basis of everything and they tried to restore its foundations. The ideals of the past were re-invoked—conservatism became the creed of the day. The older life of freedom and its absence of restraint was forgotten. A harder routine was introduced. Women lost their social position. Early marriage was inculcated and asceticism came to be looked down with disfavour.

In the domain of politics, the Arthaśāstra school arose with vigour. It gave a decidedly higher place to the attainment of desires in life and inculcated the necessity of acquisitions. Some of the Arthaśāstra teachers, neglected morality altogether and advocated the cause of a strong monarchy at the cost of war and intrigue. The older idealism in politics passed away and the concept of a state on the basis of a strong military power came into existence. An age of moral irresponsibility dawned—materialism reawakened and the past ideals of a pluralistic political discipline vanished away.

The Arthaśātra school.—The great event of the close of the period was the rise of thinkers of this school. The Arthaśāstra writers represented a strong current of intellectualism directed towards the solution of man's social and ethical problems—his aims in life how best to attain them and the correlation of individual interests with that of the social group as a whole. The aims of human existence were analysed by contemporary thinkers and its objectives were analysed into the four great categories or the *Caturvarga* of *Dharma*, *Artha*, *Kāma* and *Moṣka*. *Dharma* in its stricter sense represented the normal order of passions and hankerings together with the duties commensurate with a moral and social existence; *Artha* signified the objectives which men strive to attain in the material basis for existence; *Kāma* represented the biological

element at the root of life, its maintenance and continuance by virtue of the propagation of the species, while *Mokṣa* connotated the attainment of delivery from the clutches of desires and hangings of the world.

Each of these led to speculations and thus gave rise to treatises on the four great objectives. As to the works on *Mokṣa* or *Kāma* proper, we are not directly concerned but the *Dharma-sutras* which take *Dharma* in its wider sense, and *Arthaśāstras* claim our attention. Both were based on ancient traditions—handed down from teacher to pupil in succession. The early history of the *Arthaśāstra* is lost but later tradition regarded it as the descedent of the *Artha Veda* attached to the *Rik* or the *Atharva Vedic* schools.* Its important branches comprised the study of agriculture, commerce cattle-rearing and other allied subjects. But by far important and closely related to each was the more important subject of the art of governance for kings and the ways and means of attaining sovereign authority based on the realisation of the four-fold objective, e. g. alabdha-labha-labda-pari-rakṣanam, rakṣita-vivardhanam and tirtha-pratipādānam.

The history of the rise of *Arthaśāstra* schools is rather obscure. But, they seem to have been fairly in existence as organised bodies in the VIth century B. C. for, if we believe in the antiquity of canonical tradition, we have in the *Brahmajāla sutta*, the denunciation by Buddha of the Brahmins engaged in king-craft, the art of war and peace and the various other allied topics which all point to the growth of king-craft. The name of one *Arthaśāstra* teacher—Digha

* For a history of the *Arthaśāstra* school and its branches, see my *Economic Life and Progress in Ancient India* (Vol. I Bk. I. Ch. ii.)

Kārāyana occurs in the Buddhist literature as that of the king-maker who deposed old Pasenadi in favour of his son Virudhava.

The two chief points of interest with the history of the Arthaśāstras are first of all, (*I*) their close connection with older tradition and occasionally to some of the gods. In the absence of a real history we are mainly to depend on later evidence *i. e.* of the Kauṭiliya and some texts which we find in the Epic (Sānti. Ch. 59). According to Epic tradition, the earliest work on Dandanīti was composed by Prajāpati or Brahman to guide men. That book comprising 100,000 chapters was abridged by the gods Indra and Siva. The next redactions were made by Bṛhaspati, Manu, and Sukra. All these names occur in the Epic (Ch. 58. Sāntiparva) and also in the Kauṭiliya, which mentions Siva as Viśalākṣa, Indra as Vāhudantiputra, Bṛhaspati as the founder of the Bṛhaspatya school and Sukra as the founder of the Auśanasa school. The mention of the two gods Indra and Siva is significant and points to the early association of some of the Arthaśāstra schools with the votaries of these gods. Probably, as in the case of different schools of Sanskrit grammar, the early speculators of this science of polity distinguished themselves by their devotion to one or other of these deities.*

In the hands of subsequent thinkers some of these gave rise to well-developed schools of thought like those of the Mānavaḥ Bṛhaspatyāḥ, Auśanasāḥ Pārāśarāḥ, or the Āmbhiyāḥ, whose names we find recorded in the Kauṭiliya. Individual teachers also appeared. In the absence of proper history, we have only their

* The story of the origin of the Māheśvara school of grammar and the victory of Pāṇini a votary of Siva, over his rival who excelled in the Aindra school is known to everybody. The close association of different branches of study with particular gods and the patronage of the Muses over certain branches of learning amongst the Greeks is too well-known to be repeated here.

nick-names and for explanation we depend entirely on tradition. Thus, we have Kauṇḍapadanta (big-toothed), identified by the Trikūṇḍāśeṣa with Bhīṣma, Piṣuna identified with the sage Nārada, Vātavyādhi (suffering from *Vāta*) identified with Udhava, Bhāradvāja identified with the Kaurava commander Droṇa, (since the recorded views of Bhāradvāja on the unscrupulous aims of an *amātya* tally so clearly with those attributed by Karna in the *Sabhāparva* to that Brahmin warrior). In addition to these heroes of the Epic, other authors or practical politicians existed and prominent among them were Dirgha Cārāyana, the unscrupulous adviser of Pasenadi's son, Ghoṭamukha whose name occurs in the *Vātsyāyana*, and of Kātyāyana whom the Bṛhat-kathā legend makes a minister of the Nandas and thus a probable elder contemporary of Kauṭilya in the IVth century B. C.*

The close association of the Epic heroes with the Arthaśāstra schools is really worthy of note and shows how the later formulators of the Arthaśāstra doctrine closely followed on the footsteps of the former. Probably, in course of time, the events of the Epic narrative as well as the deeds and sayings of the great heroes, became a sort of guiding principle with succeeding generations. Their ideas or the principles they formulated lived in the floating tradition of the past and subsequent authors took them in the light of a guiding canon. This vast literature has not come down to us in its original, but rather distorted and misarranged, its contents have found way into the Rājadharmā chapters of the Great Epic. In the absence of all other authorities, the Epic should be regarded as the main source supplying us with the oldest materials

* The identification of these Arthaśāstra authors in the Kauṭilya has already been attempted by Dr. D. R. Bhandarkar (in his first series of Carmichael Lectures) with whom I had the honour of being associated as an assistant. The credit of identifying Ghoṭamukha and Cārāyana, belongs to my friend Dr. B. M. Barua (See Pre-Buddhistic Indian Philosophy.)

regarding the views and principles of the most ancient formulators of the Arthaśāstras.**

Secondly the way in which the Arthaśāstra writers view the problems of politics is also an interesting study. First of all, they seem to be interested mainly in the socio-economic problems of man and though they follow the older traditions about the duties of rulers to their subjects, they neglect the sacerdotalistic principles which we find in the Brāhmaṇas. The happiness of man in society and that through the governmental functions of the king is their main ideal and in attempting to formulate means for its realisation they take regal authority as the primary basis of social existence.

In common with the Epic thinkers, they postulate a condition of anarchy in the absence of a common superior and make coercive authority as the basis of all governments. Men actuated by greed or passion try to tyrannize over the weak and as such the latter are made to suffer. To end such a state of war and violence, regal authority is absolutely necessary and this authority they derive when the sole coercive power is vested in the king. This belief in the coercive authority makes them regard the science as that of Dandanīti or the science of "proper co-ercion." We shall discuss this in detail in connection with the social ideals of Kauṭilya.

THE NEW MONARCHIES.

While the Arthaśāstra school was fairly on its way to development, the character of monarchy changed. Partly with the influence

** The relation between the Kauṭilya material and the Epic is in itself an interesting study. In a paper on the Political Speculations in the Epic, I have discussed this point and have tried to prove how Kauṭilya largely utilised materials which are found in the Epic. Whole verses and passages occurring in both the works appear identical. But, Kauṭilya shows a great advancement over the Epic writers both in method as well as in the elaboration of his ideas.

of the new ideas, partly aided by the re-action which followed the monastic propaganda, regal authority and its character changed. A new type of centralised monarchy came into existence. The last vestiges of tribal polity or of the semi-constitutional monarchies were swept away. Tribal boundaries or traditions were swept away and big kingdoms took their place. Conquest brought into the hands of the conqueror vast areas full of natural resources. The forests separating the tribal settlements, the rivers, which were often regarded as "*res communes*" all passed into the hands of the conqueror together with the mines and other sources of natural wealth. The personal domains of the conquered added to the resources of the victor. With enormous resources at their disposal, kings became free from popular control. The spy system (the germs of which might have existed in the earliest days) became a primary political institution and the ranks of spies were swelled by members belonging or pretending to belong to the various religious orders. As we have already pointed out long ago, in the days of Prasenajit, this vast machinery of espionage was already in existence.*

Great standing armies came into existence and on this head we have the evidence of the IVth century Greek writers who speak of the vast armaments of Maghadha, and of the Andhras, the Kalingas and the Pāndyas. Extra taxes came to be levied by kings and new sources of income were constantly added. This last point we shall discuss in the next section.†

* My article on the spy system in Ancient India, though perverted and distorted through the negligence of the editorial staff of the Dacca Review, was published in 1920. There the passage from the Samyutta Nikāya (p. 79) was cited showing the early employment of men in the garb of religious wanderers.

† For the gradual evolution of taxation see my *Economic Life and Progress in Ancient India* Vol I. pp. 278—284.

Early Political thought.

The period immediately preceding the imperialistic movement was also remarkable for the beginnings of political speculation properly so called. As the Upaniṣads saw the dawn of Metaphysical enquiry, evinced by the eagerness to find out the root causes of the universal phenomena or the relation of the latter to the joys and sufferings of the individual, so, speculation was directed towards the finding out of the principles which were calculated to ensure the happiness of men in society. From the close of the Vedic age, an idealistic picture of happiness arising out of the regulation of the functions of the different elements of society floated before the eyes of men. Gradually, the influence of the ideal of order based on that of the great universal system became less, and abstract enquiry was directed towards the socio-ethical problems of mankind.

The ideal of Dharma in its wider and moral sense enshrouded the minds of men and speculation was directed towards the realisation of that moral order. This concept of Dharma is unique in the history of Indian intellectual and moral progress and connoted as it does even now a world of ideas from the primary principles guiding human conduct to the ideal state of moral self-realisation so far as the individual is concerned. In its wider sense it embraced the

The Dharma ideal.

totality of principles and precepts which conduce best to the happiness of men in this life and that beyond. It is difficult to find a single word in western vocabulary which connotes the same idea. Its nearest approach so far as its ethical aspect is concerned is made by the French word *droit* and the German word *recht*. The earliest exponents of the ethical aspect of Dharma are the Dharmasūtras which seem to base their precepts on those handed down by the canonical tradition of the Vedic Schools. In these ancient works, the political aspect of social discipline is rather merged in the disciplinary canon which regulates the life of the individual in the various aspects of human existence. The Dharmasūtras, being the handiwork of the Brāhmaṇa teachers, know more of the individual or the diverse sections of men than the political whole. The king comes in only as an individual in privileged position and burdened with great social duties. The Brāhmaṇa also comes in as enjoying an extraordinary position so far as the social organisation is concerned. The sūstras profess moreover to lay down the guiding principles of different classes of men on whose co-operation the social good as well as the spiritual happiness of men depend. As such, they contain not only chapters on the duties of men of different castes with reference to their diverse stages of life or means of livelihood, purity of conduct, penance for sins (*Prāyascitta*), but lay down the rules of inheritance of property, judicial trials, the duties of kings and various other topics.

While this is the character of the Dharmasūtras, the Epic chapters discuss practically the same topics
Rājadharma School. but they lay a greater stress on the duties of the king, since from the point of view of social solidarity, the authority of the king was the basis of everything. The glori-

sification of Rājadharmā by the writers on polity shows their mentality and the peculiar angle of vision from which they view the problems of individual and social welfare. In the Rājadharmā chapters, we have the synthesis of different schools of thought as well as the superposition of diverse strata of speculations. But, in spite of, this, the further importance of the Rājadharmā chapters lies in the fact, that they show a decided tendency towards the separation of ethics from the sacerdotal canon and in some chapters we find even a tendency towards the separation of politics from the traditional lines of ethical enquiry. In some chapters, we find a deeper enquiry, and a determination to go to the root of social existence with a view to explain the evolution of social order from the standpoint of human desires for self-realisation and the natural obstacles to them. The Epic, properly speaking, is practically the only work which contains a summary of Hindu political speculation and shows us the turn of mind that led to these. Our misfortune however lies in the fact that the present version of the Epic not only contains later interpolations but also shows a careless handling of diverse strata of thoughts and ideals.

While such is the importance of the Epic, the Buddhist canon, specially the Jātakas, supply us with materials which though not exposing to us the dissertations and speculations of the lawgiver or the theorist, gives an insight into the popular mentality of those early times, their ideas as to what the legitimate functions of royalty should be, what they thought to be just and what they regarded as encroachments on their legitimate privileges. The Jātakas supply us with sufficient information as to real life, while the disciplinary chapters of the Vinaya or the saying of the Buddha

Ideal of discipline in
in the Buddhist canon.

reveal to us the Buddhistic ideal as to Dharma and its realisation both in society and politics through individual discipline or the disciplinary model of the monastic community. As such, from these sections of the canon we find an idea as to the earlier conceptions of the nature of pluralistic discipline, though a political discipline properly so called was not evolved by the greatest of the non-Brahmanical teachers of the 6th century B.C.

Evolution of ideas relating to the origin of Social life.

As we have said already, the Dharmasūtras follow closely upon the older canonical tradition, which again hold the revealed Vedas as the primary sources of all knowledge. In the body of the Śruti texts, however, there is very little which can be called political speculation. But the germs exist there. We have not only attempts at the explanation of the origin of the universe with its diverse sections of human and brute creation, but some crude ideas as to the services and functions of the political organisation or its head, the king. Creation, as we have seen was a great natural process attributed to sacrifice (R. V. X. 90. Puruṣa Sūkta), or *Tapas* on the part of Prajāpati and to the great and eternal principles of Rta and Satya. While this represents the early attempts at finding out the abstract root-causes of the manifestations of the created world, we have also two popular traditions about the early services of royalty, i.e., those relating to Manu and Pṛthu.

As time went on, dissertations about these abstract principles gave place to the emanance of the ethical ideal, and an attempt to explain the principles of good government. The Dharma idea came to the forefront. The king was regarded as the protector of Dharma (धर्मकारा. Ait. Br. VIII. 26) and Dharma in the Sata-

Germs of Political
thought in the Vedic
literature.

patha Brâhmaṇa was equated with truth (*satya*). Moreover, the place of Dharma in human existence was defined and the same passage of the said Brâhmaṇa explained Dharma as those "principles of justice whereby the weak maintain themselves against the strong with the help of the king"*. With the Brâhmaṇa authors, this Dharma was thus something which may be taken to embody the primary principles of justice and equity, though it is nowhere discussed and explained till we come to a later age†. For our purpose, however, we must note that the above passage contains the germs which were later on elaborated into definite social and ethical ideas. First of all we find that it postulated that certain rights belong to all and secondly, the application of the principles of Dharma by the king safeguards the rights of the weak against the aggressions of the more powerful.

This Dharma idea which has cast so great an influence upon Indian social and moral evolution, predominates in the Dharmasûtras, though these books do not explain the meaning or character

Dharma ideal in the Dharmasûtras. of Dharma except that it leads to the happiness of men in this life and that beyond : (अथातः पुरुषनिः येवसावै धर्मजिज्ञासा । ज्ञात्वा चानुतिष्ठन् धर्मिकः । प्रश्नस्यतमो भवति लोके प्रेत्य च स्वर्गलोकं समयुते—Vaśiṣṭha I. i. 1-3). They

* एते इत्यर्थाण्डेयोदयस्यस्यत धर्मे ददीत्य च धर्म च धर्मः

तथाऽनीति परतरं नामादी धर्मलोकान् एतीवौत्तमांशेण धर्मेण वदा

राज्ञैर्वै न न धर्मः हत्या वै तत्पाकाद्य वदत्तमांशुधर्म

पृष्ठोति यस चा धर्मः धर्म च धर्मीयं उहौ वेत्तद्यत्य धर्मति ॥

Br. Ar. Up. I. IV. 14—Sata. Br. XIV. iv. 2. 23.

† Attempts at the definition of Dharma come only with the founders of philosophical schools like Kanâka or Jaimini. The former takes Dharma to mean यतोऽप्युद्दिवित्येव सिद्धिः स धर्मः and thus emphasizes upon the moral and also the ethical aspect of it. But Jaimini goes to the root of all human desires and explains Dharma as वैदिकात्मकोदर्शी धर्मः

then go to discuss the sources of Dharma and derive it from the Sruti, the Smṛti and the conduct of the Sīṭas.*

Beyond this, the Dharmasūtras go no further. They give us neither definition nor abstract ideas, but postulate the existence of certain duties and obligations inherent in men of all castes and occupations. Moreover, they seem to hint at the existence of certain legal relations between the king and his subjects. These we shall discuss in their proper place.

But, while the Dharmasūtras are silent, there is evidence to prove that the root-ideas came to be elaborated in the hands of a set of subsequent thinkers whose views are found recorded in traditions which we find in the Epic or in the Buddhist canon. They evidently analysed the older Dharma concept and tried to come to a logical sequel as to the consequences of the absence of Dharma and the enforcement of its principles by the king. They speculated on the state of affairs when the king or the upholder of Dharma was non-existent. Probably, a divergence of opinion existed. Some made Dharma primordial and self-existing, identical with *Rta* and *Satya* and emanating with creation, while others made Dharma intimately connected with the origin of social order and the royal office. Consequently, two divergent theories as to the state of nature were arrived at.

According to one set of thinkers, Dharma existed as early as the beginning of the creation but not the king. In their eyes, the condition of existence in

* See Valiṣṭha Bodhāyana and Gautama Dharmasūtras. According to Valiṣṭha वलिष्ठा गिरिहितो चर्चः ; तदामि विद्याचारः प्रमाणम् ।—Valiṣṭha I. I ; चक्रदिव्यं चर्चः अपास्तम्बः विद्याचारे विद्याः प्रमाणम् ।—Bodhā, I. I ; वेदो चर्चसुवृत्तं निरिदाय चक्रदिव्यं चैविद्याचारः —Gautama : चर्चसुवृत्तः प्रमाणम् । वेदायः Apastamba ; Apastamba in his work gives a higher place to the canon of the wise and next mentions the Vedas.

such a state of affairs was one of ideal happiness. "Men ruled themselves" they believed "by Dharma and respected each others' rights, though there was no king, no punishment or chastiser."^{*}

This ideal state however did not last long. Error assailed the judgment of men and they became greedy, coveting others' wives and property. Society being on the verge of dissolution the gods approached the Grandsire and he gave them a complete code of laws for the guidance of mankind. Later on, Viṣṇu gave them one of his *mānasa-putras*—Virajā as the first king of men. One of his successors accepted the duties of a king and some of his descendants ruled rightly. But, when one of them, Veṇa, became a tyrant, he was killed by the R̄sis and on their performing a sacrifice with the tyrant's body, Pṛthu sprang up from its right arm. He agreed to rule righteously and took an oath to that effect. Thus royalty was established and its duties, as also those of the various sections of mankind were laid down.

The formulators of the other theory started with the assumption that in the state of Nature, neither the king nor the precepts of

* Mahā. Sānti. ch. 59.

निष्ठत्वे नदधारं परम् सर्वसीवतः ।
यथा राज्यं सर्वसमादी लक्ष्मयेभवत् ॥
नेत्र राज्यं न राजासौरं न दक्षी न दानविकः ।
वर्णेषु वृक्षः हर्षः रचनि च धर्मारम् ।
पूर्णामानासाम्बोधं न या वर्णेषु भारतः ।
गेहं परम्पाराम् कलसांशोऽपाविष्टः ॥
ते भोदयश्चापदा मनुषाः मनुषर्णः ।
प्रतिपत्तिविमोऽप्य वर्णेषु वासनोऽनश्च ॥
नहाती प्रतिपत्ती च लोकवद्या भवतापदा ।

बोद्धस्य वज्रमपदाः सर्वं मरतमग्नम् ॥
क्षमामसामिसये तु क्षवेन्द्री नदुक्षीकृतः ।
प्राप्तो नामादरकृतं प्रवृद्यवात् च प्रभो ॥
तीक्ष्णं कामदद्यं पातालं यस्तो नामामिस्युञ्जन् ।
रक्षाय वामप्राप्तवान् वासिकार्यं पुरितिर्ज ॥
प्रदम्यादमनं चैव वाच्यावाच्यं तदैव च ।
मन्त्याभ्यर्थं च राजिन्द्रं दीपादीर्घं च नात्यजन् ॥
चिह्ने मरतोऽपि च तदा देव नवाशं च ।
नामाव उपदातो राजन् चर्णो नामनवायमन् ॥

Dharma were existent. The result was that there existed a state of war. Society was non-existent ; men devoured each other as *big fish devour weaker ones of the same species*. The more powerful snatched away other's property or abducted women. This rule of might almost led to the extinction of mankind and they laid down certain regulative conventions (*samayān*) to exclude or punish the wicked. Next, they approached Brahman and prayed for a king who was to protect them in lieu of accepting their allegiance and tributes of corn, gold and other things.* Manu though refusing at first, became the first king of men.

The two theories are remarkable in the history of Indian political thought. They are clearly based on the two Vedic traditions already referred to *i. e.* those relating to Pṛthu and Manu and though they differ in analysing human nature and thereby postulate two different states of Nature, they come practically to the same conclusion. They both hold—

- (a) that kingship is necessary for the existence of society
- (b) the absence of regal authority leads to violence.
- (c) the king, though he is vested with power and authority must be within proper limits.

[*(d)* Another point of agreement between them lies in the interference of the gods, this being due to the fact that the Indian mind could not free itself from older religious ideas.]

* वराजवा॑ः पत्रा॒ः पूर्वे॑ विनेष्यरिति नः च॒ तम् ।

परस्परं सचदनो॑ सम्भा॒ इव अति॑ लग्नान् ॥

क्षमीक॑ लालतवद्गु॑ः समयाविति नः च॒ तम् ।

वाक्यरो॑ दग्धपर्याप्ते॑ वशं कालं पाराविकः ॥

यः परस्परवादयान् व्यव्या॑ नकाह्वा॑ चति ।

विचासादैषं सर्वेषां वस्त्रानामविशेषतः ॥

तात्परा॑ समये॑ लक्षा॒ समवेनावत्तिष्ठते ॥

सहितासाक्षादा॑ अग्ने॑ रसुष्वाणो॑ पितामहम् ।

अनोदरा॑ विनश्यामी॑ भगवदीवर्दृ दिष्ट ॥

यं पूजयेन सप्त्वं वशं नः परिवाचयेत् ।

But the main point of conflict of the two theories lies in the fact, that in the first, kingship is regarded as a divine institution, though later on, the king's rights were put within bounds and he was compelled to take the oath, while the second theory regards kingship as a human institution valued only for its utility.

It is difficult to decide as to which of the two theories is older. But, it is quite clear that the second theory is intimately connected with the Vedic tradition about Manu and his services to mankind. In later times, its influence on the evolution of Indian political thought was very great. For, we find in this theory a number of ideas which were so commonly accepted and to which we have references throughout our literature. The chief points of interest about it are :—

- (a) that a state of war existed in the absence of a king.
- (b) the earliest king ruled by virtue of popular choice. Sovereignty thus lies with the people and they can expel a tyrant and elect a new king.
- (c) the king's rights arise by virtue of a bilateral contract between the people and the former.

The first of these predominant ideas is exemplified by the description of *Matsya-nyaya* which occurs throughout the length and breadth of our literature. Not only do we find the mention of the word in innumerable places, but, we have descriptions of it in the *Rāmāyaṇa*,* the *Mahābhārata*, the *Kautiliya*, the *Smṛtis* and even in many poetical works.

* We shall discuss these in their proper place, but here we may show something from the two Epics. The conception of *Matsya-nyaya* is prominent in the *Rāmāyaṇa*. As we have seen already, the Iksvāku elders proposed to elect a prince in place of Rāma who had departed to the forest, on the ground that "the country might not go to rack and ruin owing to *matsya-nyaya*." We have a number of long passages in which the consequences of anarchy are discussed (See, Ayo. ch. 67 sl. 4-29; and ch. 67 sl. 31-32). The idea of big fish swallowing up smaller ones finds place almost everywhere.

The Mahābhārata gives us in innumerable places harrowing descriptions of the evils of anarchy in the absence of a king.—The main points in these descriptions are that they harp on the following e.g.—

(a) In such a condition, the strong claim every thing. Two unite against one and rob and despoil him. The weak invariably suffer.

(b) The weak are enslaved (अदासः क्रियते दासः)

(c) Women are snatched away and violated (क्रियन्ते च वलात् क्षियः and ज्ञारेषुर्वलवल्लोऽपि दुर्बलान् परियहान् ।)

(d) The idea of private property or of ownership passes away (समेदभिति लोकेभिति वभवेत् सम्परिष्ठः)

(e) With the passing away of private ownership or marriage, social ties cease to exist (न विवाहो समाजो वा वदि राजा न पालयेत् ॥)

(f) Hence, individual efforts or socio-economic activity ceases (न योनिदोषो वर्तते न कृषिनं विचिकपथः)

(g) All primary social institutions being thus violated, social existence ceases.*

Such being the consequences of a kingless *régime*, a ruler is according to them absolutely necessary to maintain the primary

* The two best descriptions of anarchy are found in the 87th and 68th chapter of the Santi parva. For their importance we give the following extracts e.g.

न धनार्थौ न दारार्थकैर्यौ विषयाशरात्कर्म ॥

प्रीयते हि चरन् पापः परवित्तमरागकैः ।

धदास तदृशन्वते तदा राजानभिष्ठति ॥

पापा चापि तदा लैव न समन्वे चाहाचन ।

परस्पर हि ही इतो वयोग विहीनपरे ॥

अदासः क्रियते दासः क्रियन्ते च वलात् क्षियः ।

प्रत्यात् कारणादेवा: प्रजापालान् प्रक्रिये ॥

राजा लैत्र मवेद्वोऽपि पुष्टियो दशवधारकः ।

जनि मस्तानि वा मस्तान् दुर्वासे वलवत्तरः ॥

Maha. Sān. LXVII 67.

Again

राजमूर्ती महाराज चमो लोकम लत्यने ।

प्रजा राजमद्यादेव न चादलि परस्परम् ॥

* * * *

(contd.)

institutions and to protect the subjects. Kingship being thus an institution of so vital importance, the people naturally elect a king of their own. The earliest king was Manu who at first refused to assume royalty owing to the sinful nature of man. But upon this, the people agreed to grant him a fixed share of the produce of their labour and part of their hoarded wealth.

This theory which was of gradual evolution, gained ground very early. In the Epic, it seems to have been evolved out of the traditions relating to Manu. Its influence however was very great and we find it even in folklore or in traditions recorded in the Buddhist literature. In the Aggañña Suttanta we find the account of the creation of universe and incidentally we are told as to the election of the Mahā-sammata by the people, who raised him to that high office to "punish the wicked and reward the virtuous". To maintain his position he was allowed a share of the paddy from the people. He was called Rājan since he delighted all (Rañjeti) his subjects (see Aggañña suttanta ; Digha Nikāya Vol. III. sec. 27).

This theory of the original elective character of royalty was also connected with the belief that the taxes paid to the king was but his remuneration for his services of protection and justice.

यथा ज्ञानुदैर्ये राजन् भूतानि शक्तिसुवैदीः ।

सर्वं तमसि मर्त्यं पुरप्रवर्णनः परप्रवर्णम् ॥

यथा ज्ञानुदैर्ये भक्षा निराकर्णे विष्फङ्गमाः ।

विष्फङ्गेत्युद्योगाकामे विद्धिसनाः पुनः पुनः ॥

* * * *

एवमेव विग्रह राजा विलभ्ये वुरिमा वयाः ।

सर्वं तमोऽस नर्यं पुरलोपाः पश्चाती वया ।

समेदनिति लोकाद्वित भवेत् सम्परिषदः ।

* * *

इरेदुर्वेज्जवलोऽपि दुर्बलानां परिवहान्

क्षम्य व्यायामानां य वदि राजा न प्राप्तयेत् ॥

न दारा च द्रुषः क्षान् न चर्म न प्रसिद्धः ॥

न शोभिदोर्यो वर्त्तते न लूपिन् वचिकृदयः ।

न विवाहः समाक्षः वा वदि राजा न प्राप्तयेत् ॥

Mahā. Sānti, Ch. 88.

Both in the sixty-seventh chapter of the Epic and in the Aggañña Suttanta* we find this as the necessary corrolary to the hypothesis that royalty arose in a compact or contract between the ruler and the ruled. In the Buddhist account, the people are made to chose the Mahāsammata and in lieu of his services they agree among themselves to pay a share of the paddy. In the Epic account however, the people enter into communication with Manu the king-elect after laying down certain conventions for their own guidance. They lay down the terms of the contract and this seems to have been a bi-lateral one with rights and duties on either side e.g.

- (a) on the part of the king, he was to protect the people
- (b) on the part of the people, they were to obey him, and in lieu of his services they were to grant him 1-50 of cattle and gold, 1-10 of the produce of fields etc. together with the handsomest damsel.

This idea that the taxes paid to the king was his wages, is found throughout our literature. In the epic Mahābhārata, we are expressly told that the king was to maintain peace and justice and receive as his wages, the "sixth part" or the vali as his "wages" (*vetana*) or his "remuneration for protection" (*tāsāmevābhiguptaye*)† Furthermore, a king who failed to protect or administer

* Mr. Ghosh the author of Hindu Political theories is loath to use the term contract and applies the word compact to this understanding between the ruler and ruled which gave rise to monarchy. Furthermore, he sees in the Aggañña Suttanta account the real and the earliest formulation of a social contract theory.

† आवदीत वलिवापि प्रजानः कुरुमन्द्रः ।

स यक्षाग्नविप्राज्ञकामामेवाचिभूयते ॥ शास्त्र—५१३५

also वचिष्ठे न युक्तं न दक्षेनादायपराचिनाम् ।

शास्त्रान्तरेण लिखे या वित्तेन वनावनम् ॥ do कृ ११०

properly, was regarded as a "thief"** stealing the "sixth part" unrighteously. As a result of this, we find repeated mention of the epithet "*Vali-saibhāga-taskara*" applied to unrighteous kings. Again, in the Ādi-parva, (Ch. 213) we find an infuriated Brāhmaṇin (who was invoking the aid of Arjuna) expressly reminding Arjuna that a prince failing to protect his subjects was a thief who stole the "sixth part". How old these ideas are is to be ascertained from the fact that the Dharmasūtras which are certainly pre-Buddhistic, show clear evidence of their influence. Gautama clearly says that the king "receives part of the produce of fields and tolls on articles since he protected all these,"‡ Bodhāyana also says that the king was to protect *with the sixth part as his wages*,§ while Vaśiṣṭha grants the sixth part of the

* एतोऽपि राजा नौ वलियक्षमागतस्तुरः ।

समवीषापद्मातारकं वे निरपेक्षमिति ॥ Anu—Ch. 28.

चाहाय वलियक्षमाग दीरुः सामित्रयति ।

प्रतिव्यजाति तदपाप्य चतुर्थैविन मूलिषः ॥ Sānti Ch. 211, 12.

वलियक्षमागमुहूर्तं वर्णं सनुपयोजयेत् ।

न इति प्रजः समक्षः स यायिवतस्तुरः ॥

दत्ताप्रयोगः स्वयमेव राजा न तदपाप्य तु कुरुते इति लोभात् ।

स सर्वेषांकादृपत्तम् पापं सोऽप्यसंबुद्धिनिरुद्य प्रधाति ॥ Ch. 139. Sānti.

† त्रिवर्षमाति पर्वं तत्त्वान् वाचाणः कोषमूच्छतः ।

वाचान् वाचकप्रयः उदौषित् च पापक्षान् ।

त्रिवर्षे वीष्वर्णं चूदं चूर्मं रक्तात्माभिः ।

प्रसाद चात्रविषयादभ्यधावत् पापाणाः ॥

चरुक्षितार्दशानं वलियक्षमागकारिष्यम् ।

त्रसाहुः सर्वेषांक्षम् वर्णयोग्यापापकारिष्यम् । Ādi. Ch. 213.

|| राजे वलियानम् वर्णेष्टेष्टममहन् यत् वा पद्मिरक्षमीरप्येत् प्रवाचनान् विषतिमानः
एतम् पर्वे सुलक्षणपूर्णीप्रवस्तुत्तरादेवतान् यत् तदप्यवासीन्मान् तेषु तु विष्वुक्ष स्वान् ।
Gautama. (Ch.—X.) Gautama whose work is not later than the 5th Cen. B. C., closely follows
the Epic tradition which is represented by the 67th ch. of the Śāntiparva.

‡ वर्णमागमतो राजा रक्षत् प्रकाशः । Ch. XVI. Bodhāyana.

wealth of his subjects to the king on condition of his protecting them according to Dharma.*

While the Epic and the Dharmasūtras are unanimous in holding regal rights as arising out of contract, there are other important facts which point to the contractual nature of royal rights. Even in very ancient times, the Epic and the early law-books lay down the maxim that the king was to make good the loss of his subjects caused by thieves and robbers. This clearly confirms the contractual nature of regal rights; for, if we believe rights as arising out of king's sovereign majesty, then this provision would not have found place in the Epic or in subsequent legal texts like those of Kauṭilya, Yāgñavalkya and even Nārada and Kātyāyana.

Regal functions

Having discussed the ideas about the origin of sovereign authority, we pass on to examine the character of regal functions. The chief point about regal majesty was the vesting of sole coercive authority in the king. The Epic writers are almost unanimous in holding that coercion was the basis of social organisation and discuss the reasons why it was introduced. In the sections discussing the state of nature, we find speculations as to the consequences of the absence of coercion and we find pictures of the dissolution of social life owing to the activity of the strong over the weak. In addition to these, we have at least one chapter which gives us a parable relating to the origin of coercion. This is in the form of a dialogue between king Vasuhoma of Aṅga and Māndhāṭṛ. We are told that in the sacrifice of Kṣupa, there was the disappearance of Danda and as a result of it, all social conventions were violated and a state of war and social anarchy took place. The laws of marriage and property were violated with disastrous consequences. So

* राजा तु चमेनामुशासन् वटमंशं लमित चनक्षः । Vaśiṣṭha I.

Danda was created by Rudra and Danda-niti composed by Sarasvatī.* Though mixed with fable, the chief ethical principles which the Epic thinkers take into consideration are not difficult to find out. Firstly, without coercion the weak are bound to suffer and all social conventions including the Vedic discipline and all other moral relations are likely to be swept away.† Secondly, this coercive jurisdiction cannot be vested in ordinary subjects since this would but result in the dominance of the same principle i.e. tyranny† of the strong over the weak. The chastisement of the wicked is recognized to be of supreme necessity.

Hence, all coercive authority is to be vested in the king who is to act impartially and administer the laws, with a view to maintain the life, property and discipline of his subjects (प्रजा विनयरक्षायै धर्मस्थापा सनातनः ।). Danda preserves the four orders and defines the limit of the activity of individuals and castes.‡

Danda or coercion was thus conceived to be the basis of Rājya or political society. The Epic thinkers in common with the thinkers of the modern age, regarded it as the primary principle in the evolution of the state. Its establishment was, according to them, also marked by the simultaneous evolution of the idea of justice, and justice

* तदिद्वलिं न चापि द वार्णं सदरोमवत् ।
नेव काहे न वाकापै भोव्यामोव्या न विद्यते ॥
देवादिसे कुतु विति हिंसन्ति का परस्परम् ।
गवाहर्वं तदापाशोत् स्त्र॒ परस्त् च वे समन् ॥
परस्परं विलुप्यन्ति मारमित्य गवानिष्टम् ।
गवान् विलो उचिति विश्वादिमवर्तते ॥ See Sānti Ch. 122.

† गवीष्टी इष्टवौदी इष्टायां सर्वे इन्द्रोऽप्यवैपुर्विष्वादः ॥ (27-28). Sānti. Ch. 63.

‡ इष्टा निष्ठाते पापाः इष्टवौदीवा महाकम्भिः ।
तदा यद्गी न चलते चाहृः आकृतः परः ॥ Sānti—Ch. 66-67.

§ इष्टवौदिः विष्वामव्यापुर्विष्टः विष्वादिः ।
प्रतुक्ता वानिका सम्बन्धमेवी विष्वादिः ॥ SL 76.
लोकस्त्र वीमव्याकौ मर्यादा लोकमालिनी ।
सम्बद्धवौदी इष्टवौदीतिर्यक्ता भासा युक्ता विष्टा ॥ Sānti Ch. 69 ; SL 103.

was regarded as the upholder of society. The jurisdiction of the king extended over all and no one could claim freedom from it.*

Coercion being thus essential to the exercise of regal authority, the king required guidance in the matter of properly exercising his coercive jurisdiction. The canon laid down for his guidance were not of his own creation but existed apart from him. The Epic thinkers attribute a divine origin to these primary laws and principles and they ascribe them either to Brahman (see Ch. 59 Sānti) or to Sarasvatī (Ch. 122 Sānti). These came to be known as Dandanīti, a name often applied to the art of government by the Epic and the Arthaśāstra thinkers. The original work by Brahman being too voluminous, successive redactions were made.†

While Epic thinkers attribute to Dandanīti a divine origin, the Dharmasūtra writers make them part and parcel of the divinely

* दख्षः संरक्षते धनै तथैवायै नराविषय ।
कामं संरक्षते दख्षस्त्रिवर्गैँ दख्ष सुचते ॥
राजदख्षभयादेके पापाः पापं न कुर्वते ।
धमदख्षभयादेके परस्पोकभयादपि ॥
परस्परभयादेके पापाः पापं न कुर्वते ।
दख्षस्यैव भयादेके न स्वादल्लिपरस्परम् ॥ Santi—Ch. 15.
सप्तप्रकृति चाटाङ्गं ग्रीष्मिण यदिदुः ।
राजस्य दख्षमेवाङ्गं दख्षः प्रभव एव च ॥
ईश्वरेष प्रयर्वन् कारणात् चवियस्य च ।
दख्षो दत्तः समानात्मा दख्षोऽहौदं सनातनम् ॥
माता पिता च माता च भायां चैव पुरोहितः ।
नादख्षो विद्यते राज्ञो यः स्वचर्मेण तिष्ठति ॥ (Santi—Ch. 121 śl. 60.)

† Of such writers on Dandanīti, we have the names of the god Śiva or Viśälākṣa, Indra who composed the Vāhudantaka redaction, Brhaspati and Śukra. (Ch. 59. Sāntiparva). Elsewhere, (Ch. 58) we find the names of Śiva, Indra, Śukra, Brhaspati, Bhāradvāja, Prācetasa Manu, and Bhagavān Gaurasimha.

originated Dharma, the primary source of which is to be found in the revealed *Sruti*. We have quoted the views of the Dharma-sūtra writers. The Epic authors do not enter into discussions as to the nature or origin of Dharma, though they lay down concrete maxims for the guidance of individuals of various castes and belonging to diverse states of existence. But, in the absence of all such dissertations, their views may be easily understood from the parable of the two sages Sankha and Likhita* in the Sāntiparva (Ch. 23). Likhita, the younger brother, had eaten some fruits from his brother's trees in his absence. This the elder brother regarded as theft and told him to go to the king and ask the latter to punish him. The king hesitated at first but as the Brāhmaṇa demanded punishment, he had to pass sentence—mutilation of his hands, and had it inflicted on him. Afterwards he returned to the elder brother and at his behest bathed in the river near by. A miracle took place and the young Brahmin regained his hands.

The story illustrates the Brāhmaṇical concept of law and its functions in the political world. Dharma, according to them, is self-existent and upholds the universe; in its concrete and social aspect, it comprises the sum-total of rules guiding the relations subsisting between individuals and their functions relating to the whole. Its various functions depend on the position of the individual in society. The transgression of Dharma leads to the disruption of harmonious relations in the universal system and as such brings in a state of discord. In social life, such discord produces evil and to avoid such discords, punishments are necessary, since thereby the normality of relations is restored. In political life, it is the duty

* Reputed to have been the formulators of the highest and best code for moral discipline, Sankha and Likhita are mentioned even in the Buddhist canon.

of the king to look to the normality of relations and as such by administering punishment he restores social equilibrium. His main duty is to enforce the laws which exist apart from his authority.

Upon this point, the dialogue between the two brothers throws some further side-light. The younger who had suffered from mutilation, feared that the elder brother might hurl his anathema on the king for his mutilation and asked him to forgive the latter. But the elder sage rather smiled and explained to him that punishment had cured both of them from sin. (धर्मस्तु ते व्यतिक्रान्तमृतस्ते निष्कृतिः कृता ॥ ३८) Again, when the latter had regained his hands by a miracle, he wondered why his purification had not taken place prior to his punishment, and to this the reply was that he was not the wielder of punishment and that the king by inflicting punishment had freed himself from the sin arising out of the miscarriage of justice, together with the man who committed the wrong as well as his fathers. e.g.

किञ्चु नाहं त्वया पूतः पूर्वमेव महायृते ।
यस्य ते तपसो वैयंग्रीष्टयं दिजसत्तम ॥

शङ्ख उवाच—

एवमेतन्मया कार्यं नाहं दण्डधरस्त्वा ।

स च पूतो नरपतिस्त्वं चापि पितृभिः सह ॥ ४३-४४ ।

The Dharmasūtras practically show the same concept of Law and as such they make law above king and above society. The king, according to them, was to wield the rod of punishment and if there was any miscarriage of justice or escape of culprit, the king was not only to make good the loss but to perform penance.* The

* See Vaishista Dharmasūtra Ch. XIX. and XX.

स्वप्रभौ राज्ञः—पालनं भूतानां तस्मानुठानात् सितिः ।.....तस्मात् गाँड़ख्यनेयमिक्तु पुरोहितं इच्छात् । ब्रह्मपुरोहितं राइस्त्रीतैति ।.....राजा चतुरो वर्णान् स्वप्रभौ स्वापयेत् तेष्वपचरत्सु इण्डं धारयेत् । दण्डत्तु देशकालवद्योविदास्यानविशेषेऽसाकोशयोः कल्पाः । आगमादृष्टानांश ।

king's punishment removed all sin*, and even when a sinful act was committed in secret the Divine king Varuṇa remained the ultimate punisher.† The same duty of penance attached to the Purohit‡ who continued to be regarded as the moral guardian of the realm.

The above conception of law was thus not merely sacerdotal, but had a strong aesthetic background as in the case of the Greek ideal of law. Unlike the Roman idea, the multitude had nothing to do with its formulation or interpretation. As the Hellenes regarded law as the emanation of the juridical will of the gods, so, in India, law was the part and parcel of the great principles guiding the universal phenomena. The multitude had nothing to do with it and its interpretation depended on the rational faculty of the wise, learned in the sacred traditions of the past.§ As such the Brāhmaṇa had the best claim for legal interpretation, while the administration of law was vested in the king. The idea of such a *concordat* existing between the Brāhmaṇa and the

(Santiparva Ch. 36 al. 17)

* राजसिद्धं तदवासु कला पापानि मात्राः ।
निमेषाः सर्वेषायानि सत्तः सुखित्वा यथा ॥

चक्रादै च अद्या माति पक्षो मायीयनारिणि ।
मुदो विषय यात्राद ते तो राजनि विकल्पम् ॥

† शुद्धराज्यवत्ता भासा बासा राजा दुर्गामाम् ।
चक्र प्रक्षेप्तयानां भासा वेदसत्त्वो यथः ॥

; इष्टोन्मर्त्ते राजे कश्चपमुपयोगे । विराजं पुरोहितः । लक्ष्मददध्यवत्ते पुरोहितः । विराजं राजा

§ Again अजतामानमन्तर्यामी लाहितादोषज्ञौविजाम् ।

सहस्रः समेतानां परिषत्तं त विषयते ॥
यददृष्टि तत्त्वीग्रहा शूष्टो वस्त्रस्त्रान्तः ।
तत्त्वपरं ब्रह्मा भूता तदात् यथिमध्यति ॥
अत्त्वारो वा लक्षो वादि ये द्रुपदेस्तपात्राः ।
स एष इति विष्णु दो वेतरेषो सुक्षमः ॥ Vaidistha Ch. III,

Kṣattriya ruler came into existence in the days of the Brāhmaṇas, (supra 172).*

Regal authority being of so vital importance, royalty and the office of the king came to be glorified. The Glorification of Royalty. Sāntiparva chapters contain dissertations on the importance of kingship and explain the

social and ethical reasons which call upon men to respect the sovereign majesty of the king, though he was but an ordinary individual of flesh and blood like his subjects. In these, clearly, two currents of thought are discernible. e.g.

(a) that of thinkers who explain the social and ethical necessity of kingship,

and (b) the idealistic subjectivity of those who continue the older tradition relating to the king's parallelism with the divine rulers.

The first set of thinkers seem to regard royalty as a human institution, but venerate the office and functions of a king on account of his manifold services to mankind. Their views are mainly to be found in the 67th and 68th chapters of the Sāntiparva. They harp on the state of affairs in the absence of the king's coercive authority and give us pictures of the Mātsya-nyāya which we have already described in detail.† The views of the next set of

* तथो वर्णं नामणस्त्रिये निहेऽग्रेन वर्तेरन् । ब्राह्मणी धर्मान् प्रद्यात् । राजा चातुष्प्रियान् । Vaśiṣṭha Ch. I.

† In Ch. 68, we have a dialogue between king Vasumanā of Kośala and Bṛhaspati. Vasumanā asked how men prosper and to this Bṛhaspati gives his ethical reasons. e. g.

कैन भूताति वर्धन्ते चर्यं मच्छिन्ति कैन वा ।

कमचन्त्वा महाप्राप्तं सुखमव्यवमाप्तुः ॥

त्रिष्टुतिहवाच—राजम् लोकान् लक्ष्यते ।

प्रजा राजमयादेव न स्वादिति परम्परम् ॥ Ch. 68.

वराजकेषु राष्ट्रेषु धर्मो न व्यवतिष्ठते ।

परम्परब खादिति सर्वेषां विग्रहजकम् ॥ Ch. 67.

thinkers will be discussed presently but though they look from a different standpoint, all are unanimous in holding that regal authority and functions are the very basis of human existence and prosperity. Their views in reality are but an elaboration of the ideas we find already in the Brâhmañas and in the Upanîsads (see pp. 172.). Here we give a summing up of the excellence of Rajadharma according to the first set of thinkers : e. g.

यथा राजन् हस्तिपदे पदानि संक्लीयन्ते सर्वेसस्योऽवानि ।
 एवं धर्मान् राजधर्मेषु सर्वान् सर्वादिक्षां सम्पालोनाविवोध ॥
 अल्पाच्यानत्यकलान् वदन्ति धर्मानन्यान् धर्मेविदो मनुष्याः ।
 महाच्यं बहुकल्पाणकं चातं धर्मे नेतरं प्राहुरार्थाः ॥
 सर्वे धर्मां राजधर्मप्रधानाः सर्वे वर्णाः पात्यमाना भवन्ति ।
 सर्वेस्यागो राजधर्मेषु राजंक्षयां धर्मेष्वाहुरर्थं पुराणम् ॥
 मजेच्छयौ दण्डनौतौ हतायाः सर्वे धर्माः प्रचयेत्युविदुहाः ।
 सर्वे धर्मावाच्यमाणां हताः स्तुः चाक्षे त्वं राजधर्मे पुराणे ॥
 सर्वे त्वागा राजधर्मेषु दृष्टाः सर्वा दीक्षा राजधर्मेषु चोक्ताः ।
 सर्वी विद्या राजधर्मेषु सुलाः सर्वे लोका राजधर्मे प्रविष्टाः ॥
 यथा जीवाः प्राकृतेवंध्यमाना धर्मशृतानासुपयोऽनाय ।
 एवं धर्मां राजधर्मेदिषुलाः सचिन्त्यन्तो नादियन्ते स्वर्वर्मम् ॥

Santi. ch. 63.

The glorification of royalty is found in innumerable other passages. In another passage, its excellence is set forth in terms of the fruition of the objectives of life—cf.

सर्वस्य जीवसोक्ष्य राजधमः परायणम् ।
 त्रिवर्गो हि समासलो राजधर्मेषु कौरव ।
 मोक्षधर्मव विद्युषः सक्षोऽत समाहितः ॥
 यथा हि रज्मयोऽग्नस्य दिवदस्याङ्गुयो यथा ।
 नरेन्द्रो धर्मसोक्ष्य तथा प्रयत्नं मृतम् ॥

In the Indra and Mândhâtri dialogue, the god of the devas

describes Rājadharmā as the earliest and first of all Dharmas and sums up by saying that :—

चातो धर्मो द्वादिदेवात् प्रवृत्तः पश्चादन्ये ग्रेषभूतात्य धर्माः ।
 अस्मिन् धर्मं सर्वधर्माः प्रविष्टास्तम्भाद्यर्थं शेषमिमं वदन्ति ॥
 नष्टा धर्माः शतधा ग्राह्यतास्ते चावेण धर्मेण पुनः प्रवृद्धाः ।
 युगे युगे द्वादिधर्माः प्रवृत्ता लोकज्येष्ठं चावधर्मं वदन्ति ॥

The glorification of royalty developed also on different lines.

Sacerdotal concept of royalty. A set of thinkers mainly relied on the sacredotal traditions of the past and developed the ideas

which we have already found in the Atharva-Vedic hymns and the Brāhmaṇas. Evidently, they looked to the various aspects of royalty from the point of view of universal discipline and harped on the parallelism between the duties of the mundane ruler and those of the divine guardians of the universe—the *devas*. The king's five great functions were compared to those of Agni, Āditya Mṛtyu, Vaiśravaṇa and Yama.* Others compared the regal functions to those of the father, mother, the guru, the Goptā,

* कुरुते पश्चदपाणि कालयुक्तानि यः सदा ।
 भवत्प्रित्तिकादित्वा मन्त्रवेच्चदणी यमः ॥
 यदाज्ञादीदतः पापान् दहत्युये वा ते त्रसा
 निष्ठोपचरितो राजा तदा भवति पापकः ॥
 यदा पश्चाति चरेण सर्वभूतानि भूमिपः ।
 चेसव्य हला ब्रतति तदा भवति भास्तरः ॥
 चण्डोश यदा कुरुः विष्णोति शतभी नरान् ।
 सुपुत्रपौत्रान् सामाल्यासदा भवति सीऽनकः ॥
 यदा तु घरधाराभिक्षुपूर्वुपकारिष्यः ।
 आच्छिङ्गति च रक्षानि विविच्य पक्षारिणाम् ॥
 शिरं ददति कर्मचित् कक्षाच्चिदपकर्षति ।
 तदा वैश्वरणो राजा लोके भवति भूमिपः ॥

Agni, Vaiśravaṇa, the god of wealth and Yama.* Innumerable such passages are found in the Śāntiparva and it is impossible to quote all of them. In some of these not only the excellence of royalty highly lauded, but the thinkers inculcate absolute obedience to rulers and point out the consequences of insults to regal authority. Again, while a set of thinkers dwells upon the consequences of regal displeasure, others speak of the sin that arises out of insults to the king.† Thus, in the dialogue between Māndhāṭṛ and Indra, the latter not only dwells upon the evils of the absence of regal discipline but goes so far as to say that Dharma is based on regal administration, and if any one insults the king, the food offered by him to the ancestors or the gods are not accepted by them.‡ The essence of royalty in their eyes is the same as that of the gods and hence the gods, too, honour the king.§ On the basis of these ideas, some thinkers go still farther and inculcate obedience on the ground that the king, though he exists in a human form, has in him the higher essence of divinity e. g.

न हि जात्वमन्तर्यो मनुष्य इति भूमिपः ॥
महती देवता होषा न रक्षयेत् तिभिः ॥

This last verse claims importance from various considerations. First of all, it marks an important enunciation of the essence of royalty and, as such, this verse occurs in many of the later Smṛti collections like the Manu Smṛti. Secondly, many scholars of our

- * भासा पिता यज्ञोपासा शंखोपाचार्यो दद्मः ।
सप्त राजो यज्ञोपासान् भवुरेत्प्र कलापतिः ॥
- † यदा चिकित्से पापी दद्यन्तीता भवामिः ।
सदा चर्मो न चक्षते यज्ञमृतः भावतःपरः ॥
- ‡ सर्वभीष्मसुदर्शीष यज्ञान् योग्यमन्तर्यो ।
न तप्त दद्म न तृते न याहूङ् पक्षते तिभिः ॥ १४
- § मानुषानाम्भविष्यति देवमुत्तमात्मकम् ।
द्विकापि भावमन्तर्यो भर्तुकामे न रैतरम् ॥

own day, have wrongly interpreted this verse and on the basis of such misinterpretations have propounded the theory that in ancient India, kingship was regarded as a divine institution* and the holder of the regal office was regarded as a god.

As we have said, these passages arose out of an elaboration of the sacerdotalistic traditions. For a truer interpretation of the

* It is needless to examine this theory in detail because it is beyond the scope of a volume like this. But, before we pass on to other topics we beg to point out the main sources of error and misinterpretation which give rise to such a theory. First of all, the passage itself has been mistranslated and the spirit of the author misunderstood. What the composer of the verse meant, was that the king should not be insulted like an ordinary individual, since, though he was a man, his essence was higher than that of ordinary men. Here, the word *nara-rūpa* claims importance and shows that he is spoken of as being in reality a man. The other element of the king if the *rūpa* or outward form is taken away is *divine*. Secondly, the word *deva* or *devatā* does not connote the same idea as the word "God" in the Christian vocabulary. The Devas of Indian conception were but embodiments of the beneficent aspect or functions of nature. They are neither omniscient nor all-powerful as the Hebrew or Christian God. In the Vedic conceptions we find such personifications. They the Gāthī was a devotee of the Dadhikrā or the horse which was regarded as a *devatā*. Similarly, hunger or anger was personified as a god (*deva*). Later on, the Devas came to be regarded as the guardians of the various aspects of nature who presided over the working of the great laws underlying the natural phenomena. The Buddhists and Jains regarded the Devas as the servants of the Jinas and Buddhas. In course of time, as the higher philosophical systems were evolved, the gods who once occupied the chief attention of men, dwindled into insignificance, but, in the minds of a pantheistic people, their concept continued to exert some influence. Even now this still survives, as shown by our peculiar mode of expression. In our own days, a Hindu lady regards her husband as a *devatā*; so, a man's father stands to him in the relation of a *devatā*. Even now, the cow in its essence is regarded as a *devatā*. From these examples it will be clear that the word *deva* or *devatā* signifies nothing but the idealistic personification of a beneficent spirit. No question of divinity in essence or element is involved. The husband being regarded as a *devatā*, it does not mean that he is something of divine creation while the wife is of mundane or devilish origin. The error of our Indian scholars and researchers lies in the fact that owing to the intellectual tyranny of a politically superior race, they fail to bear in mind the wide gulf of difference which exists between the ethical and metaphysical concepts of the Indians and those of the westerners dominated by the influence of semitic monotheism. The Europeans translate *deva* by the word "God" and the Indian scholars follow suit. The ignorance of the former may be tolerated but that of the latter amounts to an unpardonable offence.

underlying idea we are not to go beyond the Rājadbharmanparvan itself and its best explanation is given in the 90th and 91st chapters of the same book, where the sage Utathya explains to Māndhāṭṛ the essence of royalty. Clearly, the sage attributes the origin of regal authority to the ethical and social necessities of mankind. In common with many other thinkers, he harps on the consequences of anarchy and prominently mentions the abolition of private property, disruption of sexual discipline and the other attendant evils arising out of anarchy. According to him, Prajāpati created *dharma* for the prosperity of living beings (प्रभवायै हि भूतानां धर्मः सृष्टः स्वयंभुवा) and Dharma is the highest of all institutions (धर्मः अद्वितीयः स्मृतः). The importance of the king lies in his capacity and functions for maintaining dharma and not for furthering his own ends. cf.

धर्माय राजा भवति न कामकरणाय तु ।

माम्बातरिति जानौहि राजा लोकस्य इच्छिता ॥

Accordingly, a king who maintained dharma was to be conceived (as beneficent as) a *deva*, but he who followed the path of adharma was sure to go to hell. cf.

राजा चरति चेद्धर्मे देवत्वायैव कन्यते ।

स चेद्धर्मे चरति नरकायैव गच्छति ॥

It is further pointed out that on the king's conduct depended every thing. [Practically] He was the creator (of social life) and [its] destroyer (राजैव कर्त्ता भूतानां राजैव हि विनाशकः ।)

The above explanation attributed to Utathya thus makes it clear that the glorification of the regal office *was due to his great services and not to any inherent divine essence in him*. Furthermore, this hyperbole of a comparison with divinity has something peculiarly Indian about it and does not make the king's essence something which may be regarded as superhuman.

Another important factor which proves the utter weakness of the Divine theory is furnished by the views of thinkers who justify the expulsion or destruction of a tyrant. The Epic thinkers are unanimous in denouncing the unlawful exercise of authority and condemn the high-handedness of a despot. The 59th chapter furnishes us with the traditional account of the destruction of Veṇa, the earliest tyrant. The unknown author of the 61st chapter of the Anuśāsana condemns a tyrant as a *Rājakali* and calls upon people to put him to death "as if he were a mad dog" (स मंहत्व निहन्तव्यः खेव सोमाद भातुरः). Bāmadeva, whose dialogue with king Vasumanāḥ is given in Ch. 92 of the Sāntiparva, endorses the same view and denounces a tyrant transgressing Dharma as *fit to be killed by the people* (असत्पापित्सचिवो बधो लोकस्य धर्महा). This doctrine of tyrannicide could neither have existed nor could it have been so boldly enunciated if kingship was regarded as divine.

Tyrannicide is naturally inconsistent with the divine conception of kingship, and its justification comes only in an age in which duties and responsibilities on either side are postulated. On the other hand, the influence of a theory of divine origin would but lead to the inculcation of the king's inviolability and obedience to his authority, irrespective of the manner of discharge of his functions. In the Middle Ages, when the Divine theory was enunciated by the despots of Europe, some of them like James I. denounced opposition to their authority as something blasphemical. On the contrary, the end of despotism was synchronous with the almost universal acceptance of the theories of Social Contract, as explained by Locke and Rousseau. Hence, we are but justified in drawing the following conclusions :

- (1) Hindu kingship was not a divine institution. The righteous king was venerated as a beneficent spirit

and was often spoken of as a *deva*, though this did not by any means characterise kingship as something divine no more than the other institutions or created objects.

- (2) It was, on the other hand, something which was supposed to have arisen out of a popular election. A contractual relation was supposed to subsist between the king and his subjects with rights and duties on either side.
- (3) The Hindu idea of kingship postulated some active rights and obligations, both political and moral, vested in the king. He was bound to perform certain active duties to his subjects, to further their material prosperity and to help in their higher self-realisation.

Of these, protection was the foremost. The primary word used by the Epic thinkers to denote protection is *Rakṣanam*, which was regarded as the cream of regal duties (राजधर्माणि॑ नवनौतम्). The king was to fight foreign enemies

The King's duties. and those inside. The importance of *rakṣaṇa* was so great that kings who failed to protect the life or property of their subjects were denounced as being unfit for the regal office. Protection was his greatest religious merit and failure to do so his worst sin. In many passages, we find similes comparing such rulers with things useless*

* एहं तान् पुरुषो जलाहिंद्रा नारवनिवार्येऽपि ।
अप्रवक्तारनाभावेऽमनवीद्यालवस्तिव्रतम् ॥
अरवितारव राजान् भर्योऽविद्याहिनीम् ।
शासकामव गोपाले बनकामच नापितम् ॥

Again—

किं तैर्देवतृहृषी नीजाः किं प्रेता वायदुर्घयाः ।
वन्धुषा भावोऽपि कौरुः कौरुः राजापापरचता ॥
वदा राक्षसो चक्षी वदा चक्षेनयो चक्षः ।
वदा चक्षेः पक्षो वा दावे चित्रं वदोपरम् ॥
एवं विशेषज्ञीयान्तो राजा वद न रचितः ।
मित्रो न वदेते वद सर्वेषां ते निरवेषाः ॥

or entirely devoid of the qualities naturally supposed to exist in them. As such, a king incapable of protecting his subjects is placed in the same category as a sterile wife, a barren field, a milkless cow and a Brāhmaṇa without learning.

The capacity to protect was the highest qualification. Protection was his greatest religious merit and failure to do so his worst sin.* As such, any one who saved the people from anarchy, was a lawful ruler whom the people were bound to obey. Furthermore, the selection of a king was the primary duty of a community or state as well as of all individuals.†

This protection again did not merely comprise police duties. The king was to do everything for the material and moral welfare of his people. In regard to this economic aspect, we find in the Epic an elaboration of the ideas which we have already found in the Vedic and Brāhmaṇic literature. He was to help men of all classes and castes for the realisation of their earthly aims. He was to protect Brāhmaṇas and Snātakas. Their moral degradation or starvation was a sin which assailed the king (Sānti. Ch. 76 and 77).‡ He was

- * यदङ्गा कुरुते पापमरदन् भवतः प्रजाः ।
राजा वर्षसहस्रे च तस्यान्नभविगच्छति ॥
- यदङ्गा कुरुते चमं प्रजा चमेण पालयन् ।
दशवर्षं सहस्राणि तस्य भुक्तं फलं दिवि ॥
- स्त्रिः स्त्रीति: सुतपा लोकान् जयति यावतः ।
चणेन तानवाऽग्रीति प्रजा चमेन पालयन् ॥
- † राजानं प्रथमं विन्दे ततो मायां ततो चनम् ।
राजन्वसति लोकस्य कुतो भार्या कुतो चनम् ॥

- also राइस्येत् कल्यतमं राजा एवाभिवैचनम् ।
- ‡ यस्म च विवेदे राजन् सेनो भवति वै दित्तः ।
राजा एवापराधं ते मन्वत्वं तदिदी जनाः ॥
- भवत्वा यो भवेत् सेनो वेदविद् सातकस्था ।
राजन् स राजा भर्तुष्य इति वेदविदो विदुः ॥

to act as the patron and guardian of agriculturists by maintaining tanks, constructing waterways (so as not to make the agriculturist entirely dependent on rain), supplying corn and seed to the husbandmen or lending money at a nominal

Meaning of Pālana. rate of interest. (Sabhā. Ch. V. mentions the rate of one per cent). He was to act as the protector of Vārttā.* In times of distress he was to do everything possible for the suffering people. Moreover, he was always to extend his special protection to the infirm, the aged, the widow, and the minor, and to feed them.†

As protection of property was one of his primary duties, he was bound to make good the loss of his subjects who suffered from the oppression of thieves and robbers.‡ He was to grant even-handed justice to all and punish wrong-doers even if they were his nearest relations. Failure to do justice was sure to obstruct the king's passage to heaven.

Moral guardian of the community. By his activities, the king was not only required to further the material aspects of life, but he was also to protect *Dharma*. This does not mean that he

- * कृचिदाकु तदामनि पूर्णनि हहनि च ।
भाग्नो विनिविदानि च लघिदेवमात्राः ॥
- कृचिष्ठ भक्त वीक्ष्य उर्ध्वकर्त्तव्योदति ।
प्रकृक्ष यत्प्रवदा ददायात्प्रसुष्यतम् ॥
- कृचित् स्वतुष्टिता तात् यात्तो ते साधुमिश्वेः ।
यात्तोत्तो य विद्यकात् वीक्ष्योत्ते सुखमिश्वते ॥
- † कृचित् यातीन् युद्धं तत्त्वान् विचितः मिलिनः यितान् ।
यमोलामनुग्रामि यनयाम्ब तुर्यतान् ॥
- कृपयामासदाहारी विद्ययामाय योग्यतान् ।
यीजस्य न य इतिष्ठ निलमिष्ठ प्रकृक्षयैत् ॥
- ‡ यत्काङ्क्षन्त्वाक्ते काङ्क्षन् वीरेऽन्ते यदि ।
तत्काङ्क्षोत्तो यात् वीक्ष्य योग्यो यसः ॥
- § यवदारत्तोपि ददत्ते तुतः यातः कुतो यसः ॥

was the ecclesiastical or religious head or that he was empowered to lay down religious doctrines or codes of discipline, but that he was to wield the rod of punishment and to exert actively with a view to preserve the fundamental principles of social morality. He was to see that the different sections followed their occupations, that there was no clash of their interests and that men preserved the right line of conduct. The king's duty of preserving Dharma is well illustrated by the story of the Kekaya king, Aśvapati, who when attacked by a demon, told him that he had nothing to fear from him, since, in his realm Dharma was well-preserved. As such, he was freed by the demon (Śānti. Ch. 77*) who also praised his conduct highly.

This duty of protecting dharma exercised so a great an influence on the minds of the people that there gained ground the idea of a moral (though contractual) relationship between the king and his subjects. According to the evidence of innumerable passages

Concept of a higher
relation between king
and community.

of the Epic, the king became entitled to a fourth part of the religious merit of his subjects (of all classes, including the Brāhmaṇa) and *vice versa* he was liable to suffer from the sins of his subjects to the extent of one fourth.† The Dharmasūtra of Gautama also seems to hold the same idea. (धर्मस्योऽशभाक् भवति Gau. XI.)

• न मे से नी जनपदे न कदर्यो न मदपः ।

नानाहिताद्विषयेभ्या मामकान्तरमाविशः ॥

† यं यं धर्मं चरन्तीह प्रजा राजा सुरचिताः ।

चतुर्थं तस्य धर्मस्य राजा भारत विन्दति ॥

यदधीते यददाति बृहुदीति वदच्छ्वति ।

राजा चतुर्थमाक् तस्य प्रजा धर्मणा पालयन् ॥

यदाङ्गेऽकुमलं किञ्चिद्वाजो रचयतः प्रजाः ।

चतुर्थं तस्य पापम् राजा भारत विन्दति ॥

With such onerous duties and moral obligations, the king was really speaking nothing but a custodian of his people's good and lived entirely for their prosperity. Momentous responsibilities lay on his shoulders, with no amount of privileges or rights of enjoyment commensurate with his labours or duties. He was bound by oath to protect his subjects* and to regard himself as the custodian of popular wealth, which he had no right to spend† for his own enjoyment. Such was the noble idealism which dominated the Hindu concept of kingship. The Epic thinkers employ various similes to denote the type or the exercise of regal authority. Some describe him as a father, a mother, or a guru, and liken him to the great gods ruling the universal system. In one of these the king is described

The Paternal and
Maternal Ideal.

as a mother with a child in the womb. As she nourishes the child with her own vital elements and takes the utmost care for its safety so the king is to live for the good of his subjects.‡

In other places, the king is constantly likened to the father of his subjects, and he is called upon to perform the duties of a father to his children. This concept of a paternal regal authority§, as we

* cf. ch. 59. of the Śāntiparva, already referred to gives us the oath taken by Prthu.
† So says the Aśvins king to the sage Gālava.

पौराणपदार्थे भगवत् भगवत्तोऽस्मि ।
भगवत् हि परं राजा पारकं यत् प्रवचति ॥
न स धर्मेन वर्तीत्वा युद्धे अवश्या न च । Udy. ch. 118. 13-4.
‡ भवितव्यं भद्रा राजा गर्भिनौवहमित्वा ।
यदा हि गर्भिनौ विलोप्तं प्रियं भगवतोऽनुवद् ।
वर्तम वित्तमात्रे तथा राजाप्रसंजयत् ॥ Śānti. ch. 56. 45.
§ दुर्बल् पात्रमानानि राजपर्वत् पारिषद् ।
लीके शूषानि वर्तमि वरमि नाव संभवः ॥
दुर्वा एव विहृष्टं किंवद् वक्ष मानवाऽः ॥
निमद्या विवरिष्यनि ए राजा राजसमः ॥

For an account of this paternal concept of royalty, see my paper on the "Governmental Ideals of Ancient India." (Calcutta Review 1922).

know already, had its germs in some of the Vedic coronation hymns. Those ideas were elaborated in the eastern monarchies and we find them further developed at the hands of the Arthaśāstra writers like Kauṭilya, and in a later age the noblest exponent of the paternal ideal was the Emperor Aśoka himself.

Social and Legal Theory of Hindu Kingship.

The intimate relationship subsisting between a king and the life and prosperity of his subjects or the all-Social theory of absorbing character of regal functions did not Hindu Royalty. end merely in these dissertations setting forth the closest possible ties between the two. The thinkers of the day who reflected the social consciousness of the people, postulated the existence of the closest possible bonds which subsisted between the ruler of the community and his people. They harped on the fact that the exercise of regal functions led to the normal fruition of the aims and the objectives of individuals in all spheres of existence. A social existence meant to them a free scope to the individuals' efforts and as such it was supposed that a natural relationship independent of political allegiance subsisted between the king and the community.

Consequently, there arose what we may call a social theory of kingship which looked to the king as the natural *guardian* and *patron of all*. He was everybody's protector, everybody's preceptor and supplied all that men could expect from a father or a near kinsman. We may say that the king was not only a "*parens patriae*" (in the words of foreign jurists,) but there subsisted a real moral and spiritual bond between him and his subjects. The influence of such a theory is found in the Dharmasūtras and the early precepts of

the Smṛtis show the extent of popular veneration and regard for the monarch.

The king not only received a place of honour and precedence in all meetings and assemblies but he could like a Śrotriya claim that hospitality in households which was offered to the nearest of kin. The bull or the goat was slain for his entertainment and the *arghya* offered to him. (यड्डर्धार्ति भवन्ति । ऋत्विष्वाहो-राजपिण्डव्यस्रातकमातुलाय—Vaśiṣṭha, Ch. XI, 1-2). Honour was shown to him and as in the case of a father, he was not addressed by name (नाम चास्म वर्जयेद्राजः). The king's death caused *asauca* to all and even the Brāhmaṇa showed reverence by suspending his sacred studies (see Gan. Ch. XVI on *anadhyāya*). Thinkers of the Dharma school also regarded it as a sin to slander a king. Treason against him or his assassination came to be regarded as a great sin. All the Dharma-sūtras mention regicide as a *mahā-pātaka* and a son is called upon not only to forsake a regicide father but also not to perform his obsequies (व्यजेत् पितरं राजघातकम्—see Gantama, Ch. XXII).

A number of thinkers discussed the king's importance from the King's legal privileges. legal point of view and harped on the legal consequences of the suspension of his authority. According to Vaśiṣṭha, interest on loans stopped on the death of the king. Unfortunately, we know but little about the other legal consequences of the king's death but all the Dharmasūtra authorities are unanimous in vesting the king with the following legal privileges of which we have counter-parts almost everywhere in the world :

- (a) The king was immune from trial or judicial punishment.
- (b) He could not be made a witness in a law court. (चत्वारो वर्णः पुत्रिणः सार्चिणः स्वरन्यत्र-योक्तियराजन्यप्रबलितमानुषहीनभ्यः)

(c) His properties could not be enjoyed by others and adverse prescription could give no title to such a holder. cf.

आधिः सौमा बालधनं निचेयोपनिधिः स्त्रियः ।

राजसं व्रतियस्त्वं च न भोगेन प्रणश्यति ॥ Vaśiṣṭha.

(d) He was entitled to all treasure-troves and lost articles. All properties without heir passed to him by escheat except Brāhmaṇa's property. (See Gau. X ; Bodh. I. 10. 16 etc. प्रणष्टस्त्वामिकं रिक्यं अब्राह्मणस्त्वं राजा हरेत् सम्बत्सरं परिपात्य ।.....अदायादकं राजा हरेत् ।)

Theory of Taxation

From the evidence furnished by the literature of the period, we find also the evolution of the general principles of taxation. Kings of this period did not depend entirely on the share of booty or the *Vali* paid by his subjects. The accepted principle was that all members of the community were liable to pay tax and this was in lieu of the king's great services to the community. We have dis-

Taxation. cussed the theory of taxation earlier, but, here

we give details about the sources of royal income, which are mentioned in the Epic (Ch. 67) as well as in the Dharmasūtras especially in that of Gautama. The principal taxes were the following :

* The main sources of information on this head is supplied by the Rājadharmaparva (Ch. 67) and the Dharmasūtra of Gautama.

the Epic passage says :—**मृगामधियचागत् हिरण्यस्य तदैव च ।**

चान्मस्य दण्डं मार्गं दास्याम कोपवदेणः ॥

Gautama (ch. X) expressly says **सांयामिकं विशं वाहनन् राजः...राजे वलिदानं कर्तुकेऽदग्नमम-दमं पठं वा पशुहिरण्यस्त्रीरथ्येति, पश्चाशद्वागात् विंशतिमासः शूलः पश्चे, मूलफलपुष्पीयषमधुमास्तुलेभनानीपठं तद्रच्चधर्मितात् । तेषु त निष्पुकुःस्यादचिकित्त भृतिः । विश्विनो मासि, मास्येकं कर्म कुर्यातेनान्मीपकोविना व्याख्याताः ।**

(a) Tax on the produce of land. This varied according to various authorities. According to Baudhāyana, the king was entitled to $\frac{1}{4}$. Vaśiṣṭha holds the same opinion, but Gautama mentions $\frac{1}{5}$, $\frac{1}{4}$ or $\frac{1}{3}$ as the share of the king, thus partly echoing the Epic tradition which mentions $\frac{1}{5}$ th as the royal share. This royal share was accepted in kind and in the Jātakas we find the Drona-māpaka taking it in the name of the king.

(b) Tax on hoarded wealth or gold. The nature of this tax is very difficult to determine. Probably it was a tax on the hoarded wealth and not on the annual income.

(c) Tax on animals or other productions including fruits, roots, animal-produce, flowers, honey, etc.

(f) Tax on ferries maintained by the king.

(d) Tax on articles of merchandise. The earliest references to it are in Gautama and Bodhāyana. Gautama lays down $\frac{1}{5}$ th as the duty on merchandise. Bodhāyana specifies it as Sāmudra-śulka and regards $\frac{1}{5}$ as the royal share; also on other articles.*

(e) Tax on artisans.—The earliest reference to it is in Gautama who mentions the king's right to compel workmen to work for him once a month.

Buddhistic books give us no details. The Dīgha Nikāya passage on Royal election (Aggañña Suttanta) mentions merely a "part of the paddy." The Jātakas give us no further details except

* सामुद्रशुल्कः । परं दद्यन्ते वस्त्रम् । अन्ये यापि सामुद्रशुल्कमेवानुपात्तम् । एवं शक्तिः ।

that the Dronamāpakas exacted a share of the produce (see p. 320 and 276) and they seem to support the view that the king could enhance taxes. These books show further that lost articles went to the king, merchandise was taxed by him and there existed an excise duty on liquor (*See* Kulāvaka Jāt. 31). This excise duty was known as the Chātikahāpaṇa and it was continued under the Mauryas and their successors. Duty on merchandise as well as tax on vendors was levied at the gates (see Mahāummagga Jātāka, 546). Regal power in taxation appears to have been increasing. The Jātakas further show (see Suruci, no. 489) that contributions were levied on the birth of an heir—in the shape of a paṇa as price of milk for the royal baby (Khīramūla). This was clearly the forerunner of the 'Utsanga' tax in the Arthāśāstra. (See I. C. Ghosh's Introd. to Beng. trans. Jāt. Vol. II).

Exemptions from taxation were granted to individuals under certain circumstances and to some classes in the enjoyment of privileges. On this head we have details both in Āpastamba and Vaśiṣṭha.* They concur in granting immunity from taxation to Śrotriyas, women, minors, students, tāpasaḥ or ascetics and blind, deaf or dumb persons. Sūdras engaged in service are exempted by Āpastāmba, while Vaśiṣṭha exempts artisans, beggars, ascetics, those earning less than one kārṣāpaṇa, and those who earn by exploiting natural sources like rivers, forests or rocks. He cites a Mānava verse to justify this.†

* Āpastamba II.10. अकरः श्रावियः । हवं वर्णानां च स्त्रियः । कुमाराद् प्राग्यज्ञनेभ्यः । ये च विद्याकां वस्ति, तपस्ति वे धनेपराः । शृद्रव पादावनेता । अस्मृकविरोहोविदाय । etc.

† also Vaśiṣṭha Chapter XIX. अकरः च विद्यो राज्यपुमाननाथो प्रब्रजितशत्रुघ्निरुद्धरणप्रभातः । न दीवनकचदाद्येष्वोपभाग निकराः स्युः । शृद्रव मानवज्ञापि द्वारकमुदाहरन्ति ।

† म लिङ्गकार्यपदामस्ति शृद्रवे ।
न शिखहत्तौ न शिखी न दूते ॥
न भेद्यलक्ष्ये न दृष्टावदेष्ये ।
न श्रीविद्ये प्रब्रजिते न यज्ञे ॥

Royal qualities qualifications and duties.—Royalty being of so great importance to the community, the Epic, the Dharmasūtras and the Jātakas all concur in holding up an ideal of righteousness before the king and inculcate on him certain virtues which were the *sine qua non* of royal success and the consequent happiness of the people in the kingdom. The Epic and the Brāhmaṇical texts which look to the problems of politics from the point of the ruler, thus lay down the following qualities and virtues of the king :—

(a) He should be ever active. The virtues of activity or *Uttihna* for the good of the realm are narrated in many chapters (see. 56-57, Sānti). Ever active, he was to fight for the “fourfold” objective.*

(b) He should be mindful of the people’s good and make all efforts to please them (रञ्जनकाम्यया). The Epic (Ch. 58) derives the word *rājan* from *rañjana* or pleasing (रञ्जिताव प्रजा: सर्वस्तोत्र राजेति चोच्यते ।) and this is confirmed by the Buddhist tradition.

(c) He should protect life and property. He should be impartial in putting down public enemies and in punishing criminals. The Epic cites the instance of the banishment of Prince Asamañjāḥ (Ch. 57 Sānti.) by his father.

(d) He should administer justice impartially and not be too hard in inflicting punishment. Proper punishment should be awarded by him (Sānti. Ch. 69† Ādi. Ch. 220, Sānti. 140) and only to the guilty.

* This is narrated in the dialogue between Bharadvāja and the Saurya Satruñjaya. The four are mentioned as follows :—

चतुर्वर्ष राज्य विस्ता लभ्य केन विवरेते । एवैतं वाक्षिण इति वाक्षिण रक्षयेत् राजम् ॥

† निर्बुद्धतदकः सात् किंच विवरेते ।

परिष्ठ्राविददर्शी च परेवा विवरातुवः ॥

निर्बुद्धतदकः विवरेते ।

सात् भग्नीनि भूतानि दण्डेनेव प्रकाशेत् ॥

परं दण्डं प्रसंदितं विवरातासपादविनः ।

तथैव दण्डे तथिन् दण्डः प्रधान लक्ष्मि ॥ Sānti. ch. 140.

(e) He should be guided by the accepted canon of moral and political discipline and respect the laws of Āśrama and Varna. He should control himself, not give way to excesses of Vyāsana nor covet others' wealth or women.

(f) He should follow the advice of his Purohita, learned Brāhmaṇas and advisers.

(g) He should not impose unjust or heavy taxes, nor exact additional ones* (Śānti. ch. 71) without public sanction† (Ch. 87--88)

(h) He should consult his ministers, watch public opinion (Ch. 84-86) and keep his deliberations absolutely secret.

(i) He should maintain the Śrotṛiya, orphan and the widow and help all his subjects in times of distress. He should protect and encourage Vārttā or agriculture, industry and commerce.

(j) He should employ spies to watch over the conduct of his officials and his people. (चारनेत्रः प्रजावेचो धर्मर्थकुशलः सदा। Ch. 118) and thereby gauge public opinion.

(k) He should strengthen himself by making friends with neighbouring kings and keep his military forces ready for eventualities, and also take care to have his treasury filled. ‡

• मधुदूहं दुहिदाइं भमरा इव पादपम् ।
वत्सापेची दुहिदैव लनाय न विकृष्टयेत् ॥
ललौकावन् पिबदाइं सुदूनेव नराधिपः ।
ब्याज्ञीव च हरेत् पुचान् सन्देशं च पौडयेत् ॥ S'ān. ce. 88.

† अरथे मे समुद्दाय वहुभिर्दस्युभिः सह ।
इटमालवधायेव राहुमिच्छन्ति वावितुम् ॥
चक्रामापदि चोरावी सम्याप्ते दारणे भवेत् ।
परिवाराय भवतः प्रार्थविष्णु चनानि वः ॥ S'ān. ch. 87.

‡ अवलस्य कुतः कोशी लाक्षोशस्य कुती वलम् ।
अवलस्य कुती राज्ञनराज्ञः त्रौभैवेत् कुतः ॥
तमान् कोशी वलं मिवमष राजा विष्वैवेत् ।
हीनकोशं च राजानमवजानन्ति मानवाः ॥ S'ān. ch. 133.

(l) When enemies threaten, he should fight and be ready to lay down even his life for his people.* When the enemy is too strong and fighting would be futile, he shall make peace by submitting. (संचयेत् वैतसोम् इति : see, Ch.113, 130, 131).

The fine idealism of these Dharma writers who look at these problems from the point view of the ruler is something worthy of note. They dwell on the services of the king and make regal authority the pivot of social existence and progress. In so doing, they harp more on the limitations to the exercise of regal functions, than the privileges and rights of the king. The king was evidently to live for the common good. That was to be the highest objective of his existence, and thereby he had the way to Heaven open to him as through the highest penance and virtue. We quote the following passage of the Sāntiparva in which a king's life is likened to a great and life-long sacrifice which leads to the highest Heaven (See Sānti, Ch. 25, the story of Senājīt).

दीक्षा राज्ये संयुगे युद्धमाद्योगं राज्ये दण्डनीत्याक्षं सम्बक् ।
 विज्ञत्यागी दक्षिणानाम् यज्ञे सम्यग्दानं पावनानीति विद्यात् ॥
 राज्ये दुष्प्रवृद्धे नदेन सन्त्यकात्मा यज्ञशोलो महामा ।
 सर्वान्त्योकान् धर्मदृष्ट्या चरंथायुद्दे देहादोदते देवलोके ॥
 जित्वा संयामान् पालयित्वा च राङ् सोमं पौत्वा वर्चयित्वा प्रजाय ।
 युक्त्या दण्डं धारयित्वा प्रजानां युद्धे चीजो मोदते देवलोके ।
 सम्यग्वेदान् प्राप्य शास्त्रार्थधीत्य सम्याज्यं पालयित्वा च राजा ।
 चातुर्दश्यं स्वापयित्वा स्वधर्मं पूताका वै मोदते देवलोके ।
 यस्य हृषिं नमस्त्विति स्वर्गस्यस्यादि मानवाः ।
 पौरजानपदाभात्माः स राजा राजसत्तमः ॥

* यत्प्रयः यत्प्रियं वच्छयामर्थं अवेत् ।
 यत्प्रियेन देवेन यत्प्रये योऽप्यित्यन्तः ॥
 यत्प्रयो यात्य तद्यक्षमं प्रश्नयति पुराविदः ।
 त यद्यु यत्प्रयं तात चक्रियान् प्रश्नते ॥ S'An, db, 97.

The Concept of the Rāstrā and its Ends.

While speculation was directed towards the definition of royal duties and functions, the abstract conception of the rāṣṭra or the politically organised community also became developed. The rāṣṭra was conceived as a political whole comprising different elements or limbs closely related to each other and working harmoniously in a common purpose. The general idea was that there were "Seven Limbs" (saptāṅga rājya—Ch. 122. sec. 8); elsewhere, a rāṣṭra was supposed to have seven Prakṛtis and some regarded it as having had eight limbs *i. e.*, the seven in addition to Danda which was the source of sovereignty and political power (सप्तप्रकृति चाष्टाङ्गं यर्तोरमिह यहिदुः । राज्यस्य दण्डमेवाङ्गं दण्डः प्रभव एव च ॥ Ch. 121. sl. 47).

The aggregate of these Seven viz., the king, the ministry, the treasury, the army, the territory or rāṣṭrā in its limited sense, the fortifications and defensive organisations and the ally (mitra), made the state. Of these again, a differentiation was made between the king, the sole head of the executive and judicial authority and the rāṣṭrā which comprised the other six. They were supposed to depend for safety on each other and it was their duty to help each other in distress (परस्परं हि संरक्षा राजा राष्ट्रेण चापदि । नित्यमेव हि कर्तव्या एष धर्मः सनातनः ॥ Ch. 130 sl. 30). A corporate conception of the rāṣṭra is also found in some of the Epic chapters, where Bhīṣma speaks of the duties of the rāṣṭrā (राष्ट्रस्यैतत् कल्यतम् राजा एवाभिषेचनम् ॥ Ch. 67, sl. 1 and 2).

The Epic thinkers are unanimous in regarding the rāṣṭrā or Ends of the State. the state as a great means to the realisation of the highest end. To them, the individual was an end in himself and his self-realisation was the highest goal of

social existence. His aims in life comprised the Caturvarga of *Dharma, Artha, Kāma* and *Mokṣa*. These four were interdependent and the last i. e. *mokṣa* depended on the proper realisation of the worldly prospects of life. For all these, the individual depended on political discipline. (सर्वस्य जोवनोकाश्च राजधर्मः परायणम् ॥ विवर्णे हि समासको राजधर्मेषु कौरबः मोक्षधर्मं च विश्वाषः सकलोऽत्र समाहितः ॥) As such, the ends of the state were both economic as well as moral.

Economic Considerations.

The consideration of the economic basis of the state proceeded on the lines of the past. The germs which we find in the ancient Vedic coronation hymns were elaborated into those conceptions which made Pālana or finding out of sustenance for the classes and individuals in distress, the highest duty of the head of the state. It came to be recognised that a state could not subsist unless the material prospects of the people were well considered. Society was moreover looked upon as an organism which depended on the co-operation of the different classes and sections. And so, came those considerations for the mutual economic relations of the various sections together with the remunerations of the working sections. The Hindu state was thus more social than political like many of the states of the ancient world, and existed for the harmony of classes and the material happiness of its members.

Both in the Dharmasūtras as well as in the Epic chapters, we find speculation directed to the above end. The Dharmasūtras contain passages which denounce capitalistic tyranny and try to fix rates of interest, regulate caste-duties or the relations between master and labourer. The Epic contains passages which seem to lay down a rude scale of remuneration for working men.* It

* For this, see my *Economic Life and Progress in Ancient India* Vol I. pp. 306—7.

would be out of place to enter into detailed discussions on these heads here, but these clearly show as to what they thought about the ends of the state. Economic considerations in the ancient works show clearly that they were not unmindful of the "economic basis of the state" and anticipated many of the problems which in our modern age are absorbing the attentions of the greatest thinkers.

More than this, in that hoary antiquity, thinkers were not wanting who tried to ease the relation between capitalist and labourer, by allotting to the latter a specific share of the productions of his exertions. A very old Epic passage (which is also quoted by Kauṭilya in his *Arthāśastra*) thus lays down the share of the labourer in the absence of contracts :—

ब्राह्मणाय च राजे च सर्वाः परिददे प्रजाः ।
तस्य हृत्तिं प्रवच्यामि यत्त तस्योपजीवनम् ॥
षष्ठामेकां पिवेदेनं गताच्च मिथुनं हरेत् ।
लभ्याच्च सप्तमं भागं तथा शृङ्गे कला खरे ।
सप्तानां सर्वबौजानामेषा साम्वत्सरो भृतिः ॥

Next to these political and economic aspects, many Sacerdotal character of the rāṣṭra. thinkers harped on the sacerdotal and moral character of the rāṣṭra. From the later Ved'c age, the abstract ethical conception of Dharma came to play a prominent part in the social-ideal of the Indian thinkers. Dharma in their eyes uphe'd the universe and comprised the natural duties of mankind or its sections taken separately in relation to the social-whole. It was regarded as the basic principle in the evolution of the various aspects of the phenomenal world. Applied to mankind or its different sections, Dharma

comprised that body of rules and precepts of life which, if obeyed, conduced to man's happiness (both mundane and spiritual) and prosperity. Dharma, as such, was the basic element in the maintenance of the moral order of the rāṣṭra and the head of the state was under an obligation to maintain it.

The Epic chapters constantly harp on this Dharma ideal and give it a high place; though, generally speaking, the Rājā-dharma writers take Dharma in its concrete legal sense and make it synonymous with law. In some chapters we find the influence of this older idealism, and in one of them the king is said to discharge his obligations to Dharma by his righteous conduct. Sānti Ch. 56—
 आदायेव कुरुते राजा रक्षनकाम्यया। ** आनुष्ठ याति धर्मस्य लोकेन च
 समर्पयते ॥१३॥

Owing to the influence of the moral ideal, the Brāhmaṇa occupied a remarkable position in the body-politic. He held co-ordinate authority with the king and saved the people by his spiritual services. Thus, the Gautama Dharmasūtra expressly

Extreme. Brāhmaṇical political ideals. states that the Brāhmaṇa and the king are the upholders of the rāṣṭra. Vaśiṣṭha also holds the same view and, in explaining the Brāhmaṇa's exemption from taxation, attributes it to his services of spiritual protection and benefit. (ब्राह्मण आपद उहरति ब्राह्मणो देवमात् करोति तस्मात् ब्राह्मणोऽनाद्यः ।) Consequently, his immunities are similar to those enjoyed by the king and his privileges are greater than that of the former, since, he was the 'protector of moral life, the expounder of the mysteries of Dharma and his *tapas* brought peace to society.'

The roots of Brāhmaṇical predominance are to be found in the Brāhmaṇa literature. The growth of the Dharma ideal strengthened it further. The Brāhmaṇa became the expounder of Dharma while the king was its physical protector. So, for the safety and

prosperity of the kingdom, the closest possible co-operation between the two was a vital necessity. The ideas in the Brāhmaṇas were elaborated with a view to regulate the relations between the king and the Brāhmaṇas, and this is beautifully summarised in a passage of the 78th Chapter of the Rājadharmā in which we have a dissertation on the interdependence of the two respective elements.

ब्रह्मैव सत्त्वियन्त् स्वात् चक्रं हि ब्रह्मसम्भवम् ॥
 अङ्गोऽग्निवृद्धितः चक्रं अश्मनो लोहसुखितम् ॥
 तेषां सर्वद्वागं तेजः स्वासु योनिषु शास्यति ॥
 यदा क्षिणत्वयोऽश्मानमनिक्षापोभिगच्छति ।
 चक्रं च ब्राह्मणं देष्टि तदा नश्वन्ति ते व्रयः ॥

This passage shows the interdependence of the Brāhmaṇa and the Kṣattriya, and advocates a compromise between the extreme claims of the rival elements. As such, we find a synthesis of the Dharma idealism with the political aspirations of the ruling section.

The privileges of the Brāhmaṇa learned in the Vedas were many, e. g. (a) immunity from taxation (b) immunity from punishment. The Dharmasāstras are unanimous in holding that corporal punishment should not be awarded to a Brāhmaṇa. This is too well known to be repeated here. (c) His legal privileges comprised—non-attendance at court as a witness and the immunity of Brāhmaṇas' property from royal escheat or adverse prescription. In case of lapse of heir, the Brāhmaṇa's property passed to his kinsmen or even fellow-students, while treasure-troves discovered by him passed entirely to him. (d) Socially, he claimed the right of way before the king, while his right of hospitality preceded that of the king. Most of the Dharmasūtras attach these immunities and privileges to the śrotriya, though, Vasiṣṭha uses the word Brāhmaṇa in the same sense. In the Rājadharmā, Bhīṣma denies these privileges to the Brāhmaṇas who followed lower occupations. (See Ch. 76, Text)

जनकमैषिद्वाना ये कददी ब्राह्मणाभ्यवः ।
 एते गृदसमा राजन् ब्राह्मणान् भवत्युत ॥
 अशोचिया सर्वं एव सर्वं चानाहितायवः ।
 तान् सर्वान् चार्मिको राजा वस्ति विद्यं च कारयेत् ।
 Vasiṣṭha also denounces begging Brāhmaṇas as thieves.

But, there are passages in which we find the extremes of Brāhmaṇical claims made under the influence of the Dharma ideal. The Brāhmaṇas made the protector of the universe and the owner of everything by virtue of his closest possible connection with Dharma. Cf.

ब्राह्मणो जायमानो हि पृथिव्यामधिजायते ।

देवरः सवभूतानां धर्मकोशस्य गुपये ॥

* * * * *

विप्रस्य सर्वमेवेतत् यत् किञ्चित्कर्मतीगतम् ।

ज्ञेष्ठेनाभिजनेनेह तद्भर्तुकुशला विदुः ।

स्वमिव ब्राह्मणो भूते स्वं वस्ते स्वं ददाति च ।

गुह्यत्वं सर्ववर्णानां ज्ञेष्ठः येष्ठव वै हितः ।

पत्न्यभावे धर्मेव स्त्रौ देवरं कुरुते पतिम् ।

आनन्दार्थात्त्वाः चक्रं पृथिवीं कुरुते पतिम् ॥

This constant extolling of the position and privilege of the Brāhmaṇas and their description as mundane gods was not the only sequel to the elaboration of the Brāhmaṇical Dharma ideal. This latter gave rise also to abnormal conceptions as to the possibility of governance with a moral ideal and without any coercive authority. The rule o' Dharma came to be the ideal condition of human excellence and consequently, the highest stage of man's moral self-realisation. The influence of this idea s apparent not only in the conception of the primeval state of nature characterised by the absence of a coercive authority but also in the dream of an ideal social existence in which individuals were to be freed from coercion or punishment and the object of the latter is to be attained by penance and moral regeneration.

In regard to this, we have ample traces of a current of speculation in this direction. The evidence of the 59th chapter shows clearly that the thinkers of the Dharma school regarded the earliest condition of man as having been free from coercive authority. (See *supra* pp. 276 नैव राज्यं न राजासीत् न दण्डो न दण्डिकः। धर्मेणैव प्रजाः सर्वा रक्षिति स्य परस्परम्॥ etc.) In another place of the Rājadharmā, (ch. 88) we find further a mutilated tradition that the earliest king Manu had made the rule that none should be punished or taxed. (न केन चिद्याचिततः कचित् किञ्चिटनापदि। इति व्यवस्था भूतानां पुरस्ताम्बनुना कृता॥ Ch. 88—Sl. 16) But, by far the most important sidelight thrown on the same subject is that furnished by a dialogue between king Dyumatsena and his son Satyavān. The 266th chapter which contains the dialogue, begins with the son's protest against the execution of criminals brought before and condemned by the father. The son explains in the clearest possible terms that the execution of men under no circumstances could be called Dharma.* On the father's reply that without the coercion of criminals, the social existence will be jeopardised, the son's rejoinder points out the evils of punishment and the consequent miseries of the punished man's near kinsmen. The latter also emphasises the point, that through discipline and training, criminals might turn out pious men and their progeny might prove virtuous.†

* अस्याहर्ते व्याजहार सत्त्वानिति नः स्तुतम् ।

वधायोद्ग्रीयमानेषु पितुरेवानुशासनात् ।

अधर्मतां याति धर्मो यात्यधर्मस्य धर्मताम् ।

वधो भास्म भवेद्गर्भो नैतहितुमर्हति ॥

† असाधुयैव पुराणो लभते शौलसेकदा ।

साक्षेयापि ज्ञानाधुम्यः जीभना जायते प्रजाः ॥

न मूलघातः जर्जर्यो नैष धर्मः सनातनः ॥

A ruler should thus try to discipline himself, first* and those of his subjects who show aberrations of conduct should be placed at the disposal of the Brāhmaṇas and especially the Purohitā†

Towards the close of the chapter, the dialogue turns mainly on the necessity of exercising mercy and forgiveness to the erring sections of the community, and the plea for a noncoercive government is rather masked by that of ahimsā and the futility of excessive punishments.

But, while such an ideal could not be developed or accepted for the people as a whole, an anarchistic idealism gained ground with the Brāhmaṇas so far as their own community was concerned. They had long claimed *Soma* as their king, and had inculcated the doctrine of their immunity from all corporeal punishments. This however, did not mean merely a selfish fighting for privilege, for, horrible penances of self-mortification came to be substituted for punishment in crimes and sins. The Karma theory contributed to its elaboration. For, since, there was no redemption except through actual suffering, the abso'ution from regal chastisement could not ease the sufferings of the soul in lives yet to come. Hence penance was necessary, in as much as, it freed men from sufferings which were the necessary consequences of violation of Dharma.

This Prāyaścitta doctrine which is formulated in the Dharmā^{Philosophic Anarchy.} sūtras and is elaborated in the later Samhitās open to us a remarkable chapter in the history of human speculations, so far as man's early ethical concepts are concerned. At the same time, it shows the boldness of that

* यात्र वादि निरन्तरी द्युष्टं इतिहासः ।

† एव एव सदो वक्षः कामो वाक्यादेवतः ॥

idealism which culminated in conceiving man as the highest end in himself and his self-realisation through his own efforts without the intervention of the crude discipline of the coercive state. In this respect, the ancient Indians anticipated many of the problems before some of the advanced thinkers of our own day.

That this idealism made a great influence on the Brāhmaṇic mind is confirmed by many stray references to the ideal "A-rājaka" or 'non-ruler' society in the Epic literature. Not to speak of the ideal State of Nature which floated before the eyes Indians, there is at least one reference to such a state of affairs being spoken of as actually existing. This is furnished by a chapter of the Udyoga parva, in which Duryodhana in emphasising the necessity of having a commander over the whole army, cites the story of the misfortune of the Brāhmaṇas fighting against the Kṣattriyas. The former had no king or leader, but had the Brahmadanda as the symbol of unity and fought against their enemies. Being defeated, they became wiser, elected a leader, and thus won the victory.*

Having attempted a survey of the political ideas in the Dharmasūtras and the two Epics, we pass on to an enquiry into the Political ideas which are found in the Buddhist canon. To speak in a few words, the Canon including the folk-lore literature of the Jātakas shows almost the same ideas as are found in the literature of the orthodox section of Brāhmanism. Such a thing we should naturally expect, in as much as, it would be a serious misconception to regard

* Mr. Jayayal in his Hindu Polity sites the conception of the State of Nature in Chap. 59 of the Rājadharma, as an instance of the Arājaka constitutions. Many scholars have repudiated this as merely a piece of unhistorical speculation. But, though this example may not be one to the point, yet the instances or the passages cited in this section go to point towards the fact that an ideal of philosophic anarchism was formulated by some of Hindu political thinkers. They thus had anticipated many of the extreme thinkers of our own day.

the teachings of Buddhism as something extraneous to the spirit of Indian culture and tradition. In that remarkable age, India produced a host of metaphysical expounders who differed not only in their mode of enquiry but also in their conclusions. Buddha was such a teacher and his views are not entirely in conflict with those of contemporary thinkers—Brāhmaṇical and non-Brāhmaṇical. Any hard and fast creed had not arisen by that time and if there was any unity, it was in the social ideals or traditions. In regard to these latter, Buddha was never a revolutionary or tried to brush away the past. He was merely a reformer who wished to widen the social outlook and protested against the monopolies then claimed by the Brahmins. In doing so, again, his criticisms were directed more towards pointing out the discrepancies between abstract principles and the contemporary practices than to create a new state of affairs.

In the Canon, we find replicas of the ideas in the Epic as regards the origin of social existence or the evolution of political society. The tradition about the "State of Nature" is similar to that found in ch. 59 of the Rājadharmā. Originally, the natural state of man was an ideal one, but, when aberrations of conduct arose, conventions were laid down and the Mahāsammata was elected by the people. The Jātakas, too, contain echoes of the same idea. The Māndhātā Jātaka speaks of the Mahāsammata or the "chosen of all" as having been the first king in the oldest kalpa (Jāt no 208). Similarly, the Ulūka Jātaka speaks of the election of kings by men and other animals and shows thereby the influence of the theory of regal election. The belief that the tax paid to the king was in lieu of his services of protection and just rule, is also found in Aggañña Suttanta (cf. Sānti Ch. 67).

Next, as to the scope and functions of regal authority, the

literature of Buddhism, echoes the same ideas as in the Epic and the Dharmasūtras. A king's functions according to the ideas in the Jātakas, were limited to the chastisement of wrongdoers and he was in no way absolute. Thus, when the Yakṣini in the Telapatta (no 96) Jātaka asked for absolute dominion over the king's realm and his subjects, the king plainly reminded her that "as his own self was not the full master in his realm or over all his subjects and as his jurisdiction extended only over those who transgressed his authority or violated the laws, he had no power to grant such an authority". Next, the king was supposed to rule according to law and following the sacred Canon. It was also his duty and his interest to please his subjects. This idea is made clear by the preamble to the Rājovāda Jātaka (no 151) which though it betrays some evidence of monkish handling, clearly lays down that a king ruling righteously goes to heaven (dhammena samena atṭha-vinicchayam nāma kusalam saggamaggo esa etc.—preamble to Jāt. no 151). The same Jātaka gives a description of the righteous Kosala king and tells us that owing to his good rule, the law courts were empty and that the king used to wander about at night to hear public opinion. The same story also emphasises the king's endowment with the tenfold regal qualities. (e. g. *dāna*, *sīla parityāga*, *akrodha*, *avihimsā*, *kṣanti*, *ārjava mārdava*, *tapas* and *abirodhana*. See note on the Jāt. by I. C. Ghosh, Ben. Trans.). Moreover, in the Jātakas as in the Epic we find the idea that a king's virtues brought good to his subjects. This is exemplified by the Kurudhamma Jātaka (no 278), where the Kalinga king whose realm suffers from famine, poverty and pestilence, seeks the secret of a realm's prosperity from the virtuous Kuru king. The latter's prosperity is attributed to his performance of the *kurudhamma*. At the same time, we

find as in the Epic, the converse of this idea *i. e.* the people suffering for the sins of their king. The Bharu Jātaka amply illustrates it (no. 2, 3). For the sins of the king, the whole realm of Bharu perished, and the idea is very clearly expressed in the following passage and the verse attached to the Manicora Jātaka (e. g. "sace hi rājā adhammico hoti devo akāle vassati, kāle na vassati chātaka-bhayam rogabhayam satthabhayan ti imāni tipi bhayani upagatān eva hontiti. etc ; the same occurs in the Kelisila Jāt. no 202). While a bad king is denounced, it was believed by the people that the righteous king was the representative of the gods and the sight of such a king caused religious merit. (Dūta. no. 60). The Mahāsvapna Jātaka (no.77) also connects royal unrighteousness with the decay of the people.*

Again, misconceptions remain in regard to the political teachings of Buddhism. Many scholars believe Buddhism to have been associated with the pluralistic political discipline. At first sight, the Sangha organisation leads men to incline to this view. But, a careful examination shows that this is merely an outcome of the association of Buddhism with the non-monarchical tribes of the Eastern borderland, and that their republicanism was but a heritage of the past. The Buddha's sympathies were indeed for the system in which he was born and bred, as is illustrated by his determination to prevent the murderous designs of Viruḍhavaṇa against his kinsmen.

* Dr. Ghosal gives a decidedly higher place to Buddhist political speculation and attributes the formulation of the Social Contract theory to Buddhist canonists. Evidently, this view is the outcome of a belief that the Canon is older than the Epic tradition. But, this supposition is absolutely without any foundation. The Brāhmaṇical theories in the Epic show a continuity of development and the germs of the two theories of a state of nature connect themselves with two old Vedic traditions. The truth is that as the result of speculations, such a theory about the origin of government had gained ground long ago, but the Buddhist author twisted it to his own advantage and connected it with the Mahāsammata.

but, this does not show a political ideal, but feelings of humanity and a natural sympathy for the traditions of the past.

Later on, as Buddhism grew into a great religious system, its system of organisation came to be modelled more and more on the Empire which was growing so fast. The Saṅgha itself was conceived as a great Dharma Empire. The Buddha was its Cakravartin, the Agraśrāvakas Sāriputta and Moggalāyana were turned into the Dharma-senāpati and Amātya respectively. Ānanda was conceived as the Dharma-bhāṇḍāgārika and so on. The Dharma idea, as enunciated by the Tathāgata acted on the universal political idea of the Empire and the latter reacted on it. The offspring of these two agents was the Imperialistic Dharma ideal of the Emperor Asoka.

The above summary of the political and ethical speculations of the ancients shows a peculiar line of development, and this should be taken into consideration when we try to compare the political thought of the Indian with that of mediaeval or ancient Europe.

The political thought of Europe was evolved out of the synthesis of the original ideas inherited from the Graeco-Roman with those cosmic ideas inherent in the Hebraic teachings which came to Europe with the preaching of Christianity.

Early in the Dark Ages, the ideal of pluralistic discipline in the city-state evolved by Hellenic political genius, or that of popular government based on the existence of rights and obligations on the part of the ruler and ruled, as conceived by the formulators of *Jus naturale*, went down before the conception of the omnipotent authority of the deified Imperator of Rome. With the establishment of the feudalistic régime and the enunciation of the salvation of mankind

The evolution of
Western Political
thought." through the working of the dual discipline of the Church and the Empire, regal authority came to be associated with a moral sanction though for

the time being, the "Divine Right" idea was non-existent and popular bodies continued to exercise their functions while turbulent nobles repudiated the claim of monarchs to allegiance. In course of the struggle between the Papacy and the Empire, philosophers and divines like Thomas Aquinas fell back on the traditions of Roman law and formulated the idea of Natural Law being the basis of civil society. At the same time, devout churchmen struggled to prove the excellence of papal authority, while the adherents of the Empire emphasised the divine sanction associated with the Empire.

Gradually, politics was freed from the influence of religion and with Bodin and Machiavelli, the modern theory of the political sovereignty of the state and its concept from the secular standpoint came to be formulated. About the same time, another set of thinkers, advocating regal irresponsibility, harped on the divine right of kings, now freed from Papal authority through the Reformation. Partly with the opposition of orthodox churchmen and partly with the theocratic idealism of the Calvinists, these extreme theorists of divine right were attacked by men like Languet, Buchanan, Bellarmine and Mariana, who all attributed the rise of regal authority to the people's will and a mutual pact. In the next generation of political thinkers, we find a conflict between this divine right vested in kings (through patriarchal succession from Adam) and the theory of popular election of kings justifying tyrannicide when kings ruled unrighteously. In course of this conflict, when despotic regal authority came into clash with the interests and aspirations of the people, a number of thinkers propounded the origin of society in a contract between the ruler and the ruled. Hobbes who followed Hooker regarded the state of nature as one of war. This

state of war necessitated the laying down of conventions amongst the people and the establishment of a common superior who was to exercise authority, though he was no party to a binding contract with the people. Authority once vested in the king was indivisible and perpetual unless his conduct led to anarchy which alone justified revolution on the part of the subjects for their self-preservation.

Influenced by circumstances, Hobbes showed a preference for monarchy and its authority. His successor Locke, on the contrary, portrayed a state of nature which was an ideal condition of equality and freedom in which men were governed by the natural law of reason. But, as this "state was full of fears and dangers," men renounced, according to Locke, natural liberty in favour of civil liberty. Gradually, a legislative authority was erected and the best men were elected to rulership. Thus, according to him, the legislative power of sovereigns was a fiduciary power for certain ends and was liable to removal in case of its arbitrary exercise. These theories held ground for a time and under their influence many publicists of Europe cried 'back to nature.' The Encyclopedists like Montesquieu, however, advocated a moderate constitutional *regime*. But as circumstances never became favourable for reform, it was reserved for Rousseau with his idealistic and deductive method to reformulate the '*Contrat social*' with a view to prove the entire dependence of regal authority upon popular choice and the real rule of the people.

The history of Hindu political speculation, similarly, shows a conflict and ultimate synthesis of several currents and counter-

Nature of Indian Political speculation. currents of ideas. The different angles of vision of the thinkers who looked at these problems from the ethical or the sacerdotal point of view, have been discussed and

we have summarised the different theories arising out of their peculiar ways of viewing the problems. In the earlier stages of Indian speculation, this sacerdotal influence was very great and politics was intimately connected with religion, (as we have seen in connection with the ideas contained in the Brâhmaṇas). Gradually, as the horizon cleared, the ethical and social needs of man claimed greater attention and there came a tendency to look to these problems independently. This took place in the same age which saw the metaphysical speculations relating to the universal phenomena, and the same amount of abstraction was directed towards the solution of socio-ethical problems. The influence of these is found in the speculations about the origin of sovereignty, the need of a king and the concept of a 'state of nature', which existed prior to the establishment of regal authority. These, show indeed, a parallelism of development so far as India and Mediaeval Europe are concerned.

On many points, we have little of essential differences. The Indian thinkers grappled with the same problems and anticipated the solution which medieval theorists attempted centuries later. The speculations about the necessity of a common superior led them to postulate a State of Nature. The concept of a 'state of nature' has had its parallel in Europe, for, as we know, Hobbes, Locke and Rousseau all made it the basis of their political theories.

As the conceptions of Hobbes materially differed from those of Locke, ever so the two Indian concepts regarding this 'natural condition' differed from each other. Hobbes' theory of a state of nature is almost the same as we find in the 67th chapter of the Sânti-parva, which regards the condition of man in a natural state, as one of war. The theory of Locke is nearly similar to that of the propounders of the Dharma ideal. In Ch. 59, again,

in formulating the importance of *Dan̄ḍa* as the basis of state, Hindu thinkers anticipated many of their brethren of the modern age.

While we find a clear parallelism, there is enough room for noting differences in the line of thought between Indian thinkers and those of the West. In most chapters relating to the origin and exercise of sovereign authority, we find Indian thinkers interposing the agency of the divine rulers, showing thereby the close dependence of political ideas on those relating to the universal system. This peculiarity is clearly noticeable as well as the fact that religion and the peculiar cosmic ideas made a deeper influence in India so far as the ethical ideas were concerned. Life with the Indian was not an end in itself but it was a mere phase in a greater existence. Its pleasures and pains were the after-effects of *Karma* in previous births, and its future, too, was determined by the good or evil done in its duration. Thus, the influence of the philosophical ideas of rebirth and *Karma* widened the ethical outlook of the Indian and connected it closely with the world unknown. The ideas in regard to the latter were different from those that gained ground in Europe where, only the material aspects of the present existence was taken into consideration. Then, again, the divine agents remained ever-present in the Indian mind and made the deepest impression in spite of the growth of a higher philosophy which directed itself towards the conception of the absolute. While these gave a peculiar turn to Indian political speculation, diversity in social evolution gave rise to certain principles which have exercised their influence even to this day.

First of all, the Indian believed in a social existence which depended for its smooth working on the harmonious co-operation of sections, mutually inter-dependent, but not enjoying the same and equal social status. The castes

which composed the social structure were but parts of the same organisation, though their functions and status were not the same.

Some important principles underlying socio-political evolution.

Equality in social matters never became the ideal with Indian thinkers and they never emphasised the attainment of this ideal. This was partly due to the fact that a composite society grew out of a social federation of races and tribes whose ethnic divergences and cultural differences made unification impossible. Such a type of social existence became popular in view of the fact that it ensured the socio-economic cooperation of sections and avoided at the same time the race-war which would have been the necessary consequences of a hankering after a homogenous social structure. The Indian mind never yearned after equality but delighted in diversities. Caste has had undoubtedly its defects, but, its leading beneficial features have been ignored by western thinkers. A detailed discussion on this head will be out of place here, but, anyhow it is easy to understand that in India equality never became a political necessity. The Indian conceived certain rights common to all including the members of the most degraded sections but believed at the same time in diversities of evolution through higher intelligence or effort. The right to exist, to have family or property, or a claim to royal protection, belonged to the Sudra equally with the Brahmin or the prince, but beyond that, there remained scope for diversity of progress and advancement. Furthermore, inequality never stood in the path of political association or social co-operation and the diversities of social condition or status were easily explained through the theories of Karma and rebirth. Hence, a strife of classes was eliminated and the composite federated social structure continued to be lauded.

Secondly, such a social concept was not without influence on the aim and scope of political life, as well as the organisation of the political machinery. A society composed of diverse ethnic elements required for its normal working a strong executive authority and a set of fundamental principles to guide the actions of the ruler. As such, regal authority was erected on a stronger basis and monarchy became the ideal of Hindu political philosophers. But, at the same time, the holder of the regal office was subjected to the fundamental laws of the disciplinary canon, both political and social. The scope of popular activity in matters of legislation was also narrowed down. Laws were allowed to evolve gradually and their interpretation was vested not in the multitude but in the wise exponents of real social opinion.* Within their own folds, communities had the fullest scope for democratic social life, and their customs were regarded as valid. In social and economic matters too, the representatives of the different sections had their recognised place. But, the fundamental principles guiding social life as a whole were kept out of the reach of the multitude. Thus, the internal autonomy of the different sections was maintained while revolutionary changes were prevented.

Thirdly, the elevation of the Brāhmaṇa to the highest social position eliminated the timocratic basis of political superiority which we find in Europe from the days of the Solonian democracy

* अवतानाममन्वाणीं जातिमावोपशीविनाम् ।
 सङ्क्षेपः सभेतानीं परिषद्वं न विद्यते ॥
 यद्वद्विं तसोमृदा मूर्खं चमेमजानतः ।
 तस्यामं ग्रतधा भूत्वा तदकृष्णधिगच्छति ॥
 चत्वारी वा वयो वापि यं ब्रूयुदयारदाः ।
 स धर्म इति विज्ञेयो नेतरेषां सङ्क्षेपः ॥

to the middle of the last century. In India, wealth never became the standard or sole basis of political franchise.

Finally, the crude political discipline never came to be regarded as the *summum bonum* of existence. Man was not a means as in the speculations of Europe, but, he was the highest end in himself. It was for his self-realisation that the state was conceived as a means to that higher end. The state and its discipline extended over the whole of man's economic or material activity, but, beyond that, the self-disciplined individual was left to himself to work his own salvation. Religion or intellectual advancement never came within the scope of political discipline. Elsewhere, we shall discuss these points in detail.

Note—Before passing on to the next section, we beg to draw the attention of readers to a few facts relating to the political speculation of the Epic thinkers. As a rule, they view the problems of politics from the standpoint of the rulers. Yet, a careful study of the various chapters show that they conceived of certain fundamental rights naturally vesting in the people, if we are allowed to use the word right in that sense.

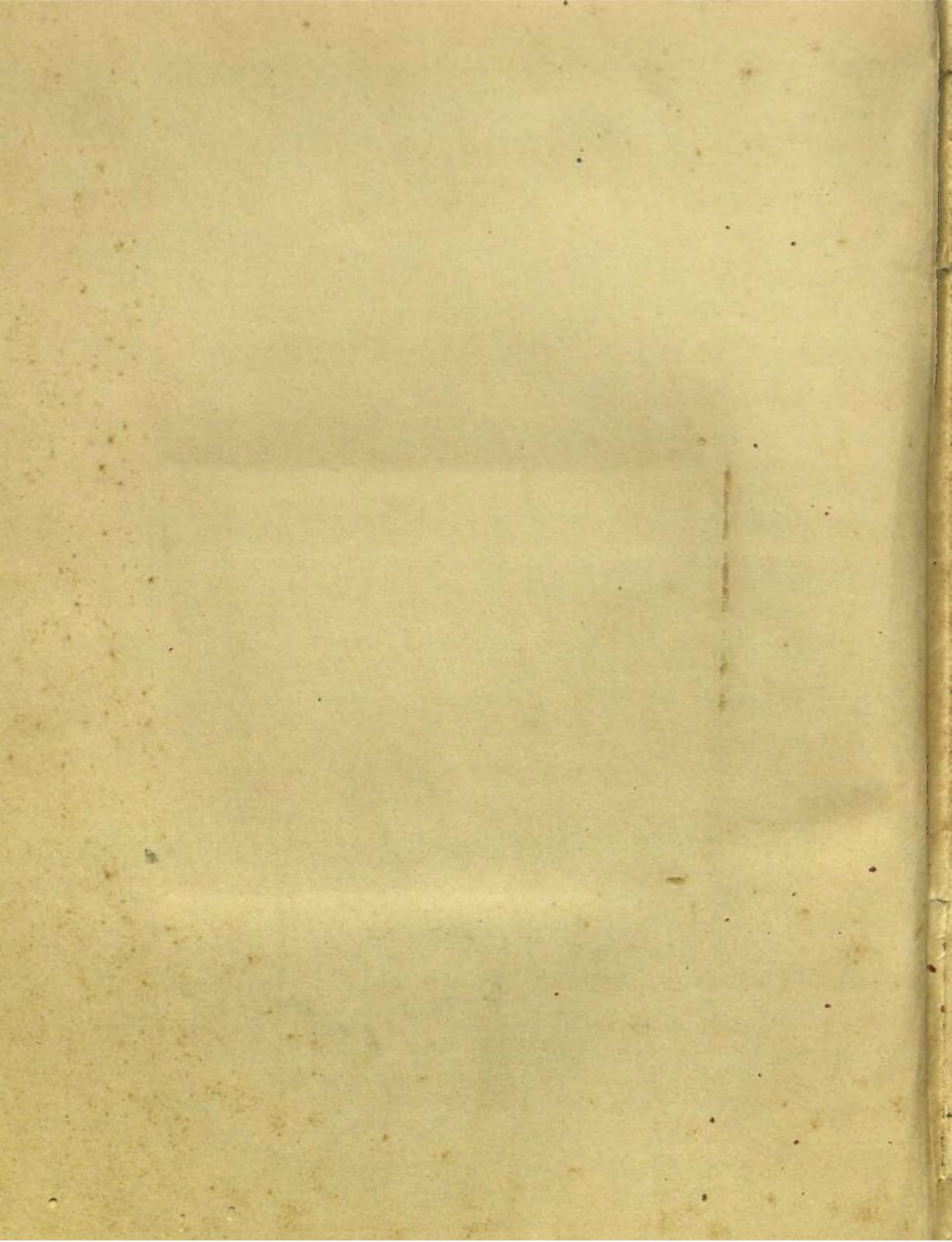
These were, socially, the right to exist, the right to hold and maintain family, the right to own lawfully-earned property, and the right to look after his own self-realisation both material and spiritual. The right of self-defence was also vested in the individual and as such, the murder of an assailant even if he were a prince or a Brahmin was not punishable.

The king as the head of the state was to ensure these rights and to extend his protection to all. He was to deal out justice with impartiality to all his subjects. Failure to do this made him not only morally culpable but he was liable to removal by the people, in whom resided the 'moral right of revolution.' This would appear from the views of the extreme champions of popular right like Bāmadeva or the author of the *Anuśāsana* passage already referred to. The doctrine of tyrannicide held ground in India also, and the views of Indian thinkers may be compared with those of Mariana and others in Europe.

Regal power was subjected to many limitations, and these checks may be summarised follows :—

- (1) The king was equally subject to the law and was not vested with law power.
- (2) He had no right of arbitrary taxation. He was not the owner of land he impose arbitrary punishments.
- (3) Justice was ensured by the existence of assessors in all law-suits who determined the guilt, while the king simply passed sentence and their voice
- (4) In the small democratic states, there was always a strong public force of all castes and sections had their laws recognised. Their opinion and men force, and if we are to believe in the Epic, caste-war guilds were a potent seats in the Regal Council. representatives had their





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